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**THESIS**

**MANPOWER PLANNING IN THE ZIMBABWE PUBLIC  
SECTOR: A MYTH OR REALITY?**

by

Pinias Rabson Mushayavanhu

September 1994

Co-Advisors:

Alice M. Crawford  
Mark J. Eitelberg

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SECTOR: A MYTH OR REALITY?**

by

Pinias Rabson Mushayavanhu  
Assistant Secretary (Management Services)  
Ministry of Defence, Zimbabwe  
Bachelor of Administration, University of Zimbabwe, 1981  
Diploma in Rural Development Planning,  
University of Zimbabwe, 1984

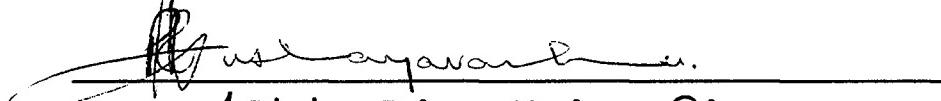
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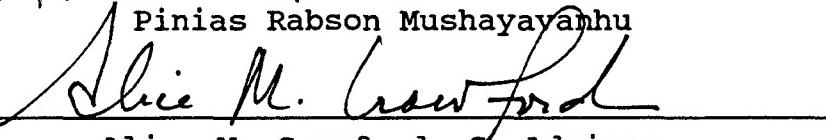
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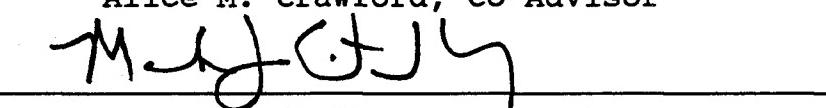
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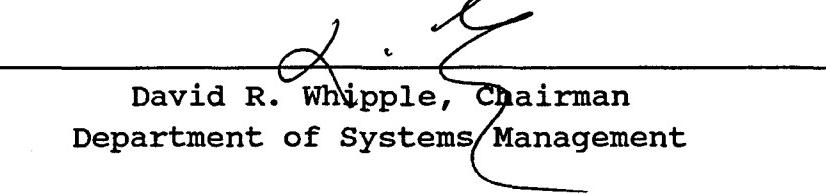
Author:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Pinias Rabson Mushayavanhu

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Alice M. Crawford, Co-Advisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark J. Eitelberg, Co-Advisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David R. Whipple, Chairman  
Department of Systems Management

## ABSTRACT

Almost all of the human resources management problems experienced in the Zimbabwean public sector today are related to the lack of qualified personnel. The expansion of government into "development" fields and the attendant growth in administration have increased the number of inexperienced personnel. Consequently, there is a clear need to make changes to develop a modern and efficient public sector. This thesis discusses the need for manpower planning, an activity that has been denied attention in the public sector. It presents various techniques that may be applied by decision makers for the effective utilization of human resources in the public sector. The intent is to provide a useful basis for change in the human resource management culture in the civil service of Zimbabwe. It is appropriate to focus on this important aspect of the personnel function now in view of current restructuring occurring in the public sector of Zimbabwe.

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my childhood friend, ENERGY JOHN BENJAMIN, who in 1978 sacrificed everything to join the liberation of Zimbabwe and whose non-return still puzzles me.

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Pinias Rabson Mushayavanhu

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. KEY POINTS

The primary concern of this thesis is on the following key points of human resource planning:

1. Human resource issues are of substantial and increasing importance in the management of large organizations.
2. While certain staff roles have evolved in human resource planning, the process remains largely a line management activity linked to ongoing business planning.
3. Forecasting human resource needs is a central aspect of the process and it involves anticipation of changing staffing and organizational requirements.
4. Managing good performance in an organization is a result of forward-looking planning and implementation of programs for improving overall productivity. This is done through the organization of work activities, appraisal and the development of individual competencies, and performance planning and appraisal. (Walker, 1980)

Because they seem to enhance the status of manpower management within the overall context of general management, these key points will form the centerpiece of my arguments in the thesis.

This thesis provides a definition of the various manpower issues and of the techniques that may be applied for the effective utilization of manpower in the Zimbabwean public sector. It views human resource planning as a management process that is not merely a part of the personnel function. The thesis has a practical emphasis and contains a lot of illustrations of the applications of manpower planning

practices in the Zimbabwean public sector. For this reason, it is meant to provide a useful persuasion for change in the human resource management culture in the government sector.

#### B. PREVIEW

Chapter I deals with some important introductory remarks that should be kept in mind as the reader goes deeper into the thesis. Apart from presenting the thesis organization through a preview, the chapter gives a general background of the problem of manpower planning in Zimbabwe. The reader is given a "bird's eye view" of the problems and issues that have created the prevailing manpower conditions in the public sector.

In Chapter II, the origins and evolution of human resource planning practices are examined in search of a clearer understanding of the subject. Several important terms are defined to provide a common understanding of the subject. This chapter also provides a historical perspective of the current practices and concerns of manpower management in Zimbabwe and speculates about the future.

Chapter III discusses varying theories of manpower planning. This Chapter represents the main body of the literature review on the subject. It attempts to answer the question: What are the various theories on manpower planning? Further: Are the various theorists on the subject agreed as to what manpower planning is all about?

Chapter IV introduces the focal point of study in the thesis, the Ministry of Defense. The manpower practices of the Ministry of Defense are discussed and the reader is bound to have a feel for what the personnel management culture in the Zimbabwe public sector is like. The chapter ends with a discussion of the major problems of manpower planning in that ministry. This will give an indication of the limitations of the various government departments in trying to improve their manpower planning practices.

The fifth chapter considers the varying attitudes toward manpower planning found among manpower practitioners in government circles. In most cases, manpower planning is a product of how the organization tries to portray the importance of the activity in the context of other aspects of personnel management. Weighed against the other activities that claim the manager's occupational time, manpower planning has to compete for recognition. A survey was distributed to fourteen personnel officers in the public sector ministries in Zimbabwe. The questionnaires were designed to measure the officers' commitment toward manpower planning. Basically, the two-part questionnaire addressed the following question: What level of commitment to manpower planning has the public sector managed to instill in its human resource managers? The results of the survey are analyzed and discussed in this chapter.

The final chapter offers some recommendations on what can be done to improve the manpower planning situation in the Zimbabwe public sector. If that sector has to stand up to the stiff competition for qualified manpower with the private sector, then the need to strengthen its manpower planning capability cannot be overemphasized.

### C. BACKGROUND

When Zimbabwe achieved its independence in 1980, practically the whole of the senior service was white. The uncertainty that prevailed then caused a wave of resignations by white civil servants. This left the public sector in a situation where it had to depend considerably on inexperienced personnel to take care of colossal problems both of reconstruction of a country devastated by war and of development to provide for existing and future needs of the people in housing and resettlement, health, education, communication, and so forth. Then came the announcement of The Presidential Directive (1980) by the national President.<sup>1</sup> This directive called for the public sector to represent or reflect the racial composition of the Zimbabwean population. After years of being denied service in the public sector, the political directive resulted in many black Zimbabweans joining the

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<sup>1</sup>President Canaan Banana. For more on the Presidential Directive see Appendix A.

service.<sup>2</sup> The recruitment procedures tended to be haphazard, as no civil service culture had been nurtured yet in the public sector.<sup>3</sup>

As the new entrants to the public sector were beginning to gain the necessary expertise, competition for qualified personnel with the private sector had started to take its toll. The highly attractive job prospects and perks offered by the private sector proved too good for the public servants whose own situations were characterized by poor conditions of service and unclear job prospects. Over the years, the public sector became characterized by personnel shortages in vital skills, underemployment in many departments, and a clear situation in which people were assigned to jobs that were outside their qualifications. For example it was not surprising to get a situation where a lawyer was doing an administrative job or a rural development planner doing defense planning.

In the 1980s, public and private organizations provided government with a lot of scholarships for staff-development purposes. Strictly controlled by the central ministry, the

---

<sup>2</sup>Prior to 1981, blacks were allowed entry only in the lower echelons of the civil service. Although the Presidential Directive sounded "racist" to some, in fact its aim was to reverse the racial policies or trends of the past.

<sup>3</sup>No clear guidelines existed in the public sector then with regards to salary grades, promotion paths, methods of recruitment, levels of qualification or experience. This was due to the fact that the changes being called for by the new situation amounted to the virtual creation of a new civil service with no historical past as a point of reference.

Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare, these offers were either not taken up or were taken up for inappropriate skills such as art or home economics, whose training could have been done locally at inexpensive institutions. Notably, selection criteria were based on partisan lines so that applicants who were selected were not necessarily the best qualified. Even in the early 1990s, ten years after independence, sponsorship continues to be haphazard with no clear coordination between the scholarships available and the departments' manpower requirements. It is because of intense frustration that some donors have started to go out of their way to offer scholarships directly to sectoral ministries. This situation has tempted ministries to work out and implement their own sectoral manpower development plans without any reference to the central ministry.<sup>4</sup> This observation is so glaring to any internal and external observer of the current scholarship distribution system in the Zimbabwe public sector.

This uncoordinated situation has not aided the interests of public servants either. To them, frustration is still being generated by the lack of incentives for additional qualifications, or not being placed in appropriate departments after training. These are symptoms of a public sector that

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<sup>4</sup>Essay, "Towards an Equitable Distribution of Training Opportunities," by Gab Shoko, written for the Institute of Personnel Management Magazine, March 1985.

has very little regard to systematic manpower development planning.<sup>5</sup>

Currently, many public sector organizations in Zimbabwe are failing to effectively meet their goals because of staff problems. Manpower planning officers fail to anticipate required manpower needs in the extremely transient environment of the public sector. For example, the reason why the level of health care in public hospitals has tremendously declined has officially been attributed to the lack of qualified medical personnel.<sup>6</sup> This has coincided with the political introduction of free medical aid to sections of the community where it has been previously denied. The currently heavy reliance on expatriate personnel in the education field is due to the fact that government manpower planners did not train enough local teachers to meet the anticipated increase in school enrollment during the early 1990s.

In spite of several structural changes over the years, the public sector has retained a distinctly discernable form. It is made up of eighteen ministries, all of which depend on the central ministry, the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and

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<sup>5</sup>The Institute of Personnel Management (Zimbabwe) newsletter, which monitors manpower trends in both the public and private sector in the country, had this to say in its November 1988 issue.

<sup>6</sup>Ministry of Health Annual Report for end of 1988.

Social Welfare for their human resource requirements.<sup>7</sup> Figure 1 shows the manpower linkages of the various ministries to the central ministry and the special position of the department of National Scholarships, which administratively falls under the President's Office. Through specific guidelines, each ministry prepares its own sectoral manpower development plan, which is then forwarded to the central ministry for consolidation and operationalization as a National Manpower Plan.

#### D. SCOPE OF THESIS

Given all these manpower planning problems in the public sector, this study aims to make the public sector in Zimbabwe aware that manpower planning is very important for them if they are to meet their targeted goals. Specifically, it attempts to achieve the following:

1. Make a case for manpower planning to Zimbabwe manpower policy makers in the public sector;
2. Assist in the improvement of the currently existing manpower planning practices in the public sector organizations; and
3. Make the public sector realize its immense potential advantages in terms of training support and financial resources, in its cut-throat competition with the private sector for qualified personnel.

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<sup>7</sup>Through the Public Service Commission, a permanent executive board, the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare is supposed to recruit and train civil servants for all government ministries.

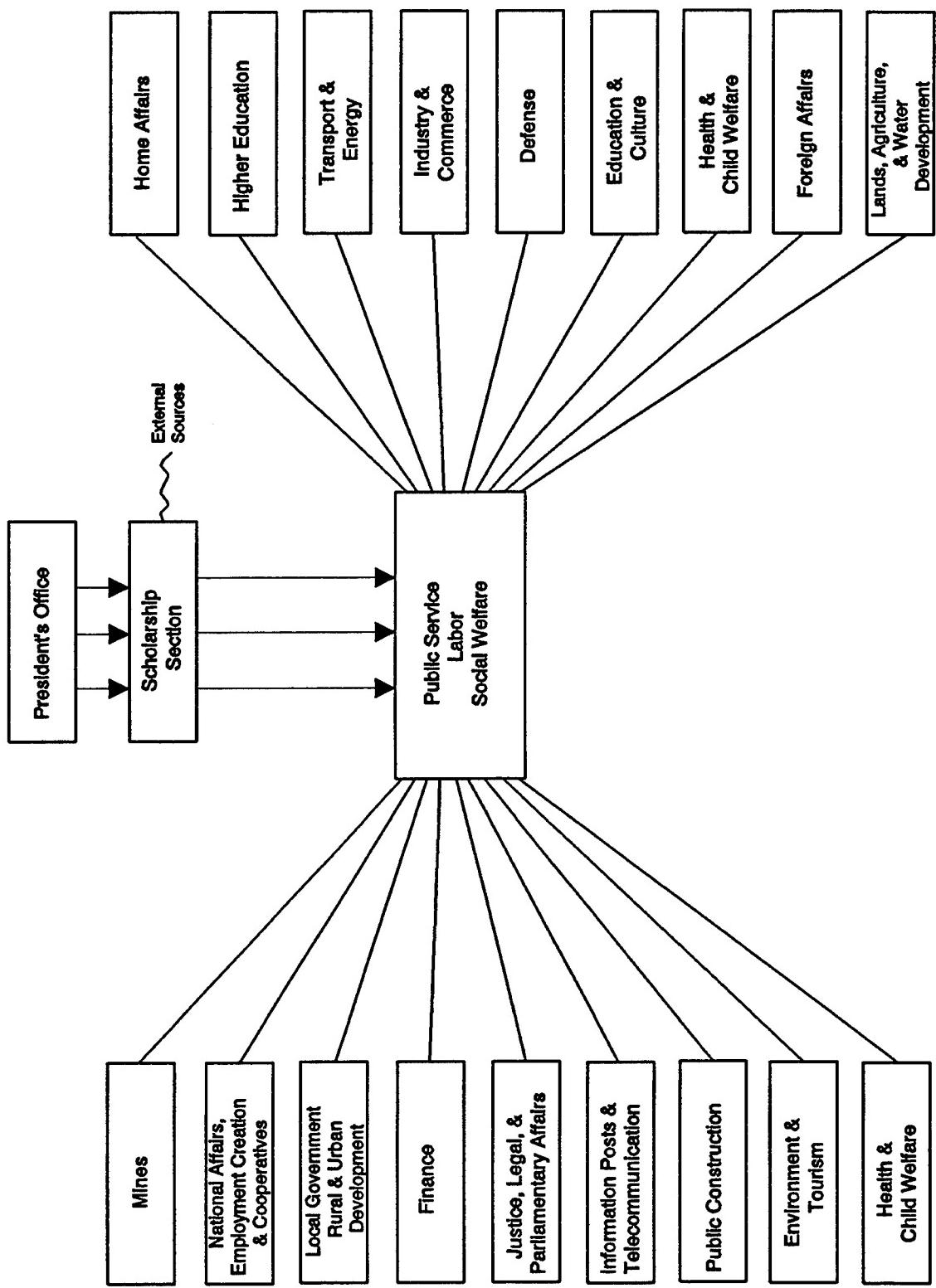


Figure 1. Manpower Linkages of Zimbabwe Government Ministries to the Central Ministry

#### **E. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

To address the above-mentioned issues squarely, the thesis attempts to answer the following broad research question: Are current public sector manpower planning practices in Zimbabwe effective? This is narrowed down to specifically answer the following questions:

1. What are the intended objectives of manpower planning in Zimbabwe?
2. Are these manpower planning objectives being met?
3. Are the manpower planning guidelines issued to the Ministry of Defense effective?
4. Are there deficiencies in the tracking methods used for manpower information gathering?
5. Do the data-keeping methods meet the intended purpose?
6. What is the impact of the current system of manpower planning in the Ministry of Defense?
7. What level of commitment to manpower planning has the public sector managed to instill in its human resources management officers?

The study hypothesis is that current public sector manpower practices in Zimbabwe are ineffective. The implied assumption of the thesis is that the Zimbabwe public sector does human resource planning and indeed appreciates its benefits. Whether this kind of planning satisfies the intended objectives becomes a central theme of the inquiry.

#### **F. METHODOLOGY**

This study combines a sample case study and explanatory strategy to expose the "whole" through the study of one representative part, the Ministry of Defense.

The thesis studies the situation of manpower practices in the Ministry of Defense and then, through library research on the subject, attempts to prove or disapprove the hypothesis. Since, in most part, the thesis uses personal experience, it also includes anecdotal descriptions and explanations of what the situation is really like in the ministry.

The day-to-day interlinks between the central ministry and the Ministry of Defense are closely studied by examining what it really is like against what it should be. Through this focused, descriptive methodology, the research draws conclusions on the entire sector and examines implications for overall effectiveness.

First, the thesis considers the intended objectives of manpower planning in the public sector as they are described in the central ministry's publications. Then, it looks at the manpower planning guidelines offered to sectoral ministries by the central ministry and analyzes their relevance for effectiveness. Through an examination of the situation as it is, one can observe whether the guidelines have any effect at all. The critical analysis of these methods is done with a view toward suggesting improvements.

One of the most critical challenges to manpower planning is keeping accurate manpower information for the current staff. The customizing of data-keeping methods, like manual recording or staff cards, used by most ministries presents an

interesting study. Whether they serve the desired purpose or not, falls within the scope of this study.

Finally, a small questionnaire is administered to all the Chief Executive Officers (Manpower) of the public sector ministries. This is aimed at ascertaining the level of commitment among these officers to the planning function.

## II. UNDERSTANDING MANPOWER PLANNING

### A. ORIGINS OF THE DISCIPLINE

The essence of the management process is the design and implementation of plans to accomplish desired organizational objectives. This involves the entrepreneurial functions of decision making, organizing, staffing, directing, and coordinating. Management in a broad sense is getting things done by working with and through other people. (Drucker, 1977)

The growth in the size of public organizations over time has led to the natural division of activities into functions like finance, personnel, and research and development. (Beach, 1977, p. 9) Thus, personnel management is only one of the many functions of any modern organization.

Planning for the staffing for work to be done is not a recent notion. Human resource planning has been a function of management since the origins of the modern industrial organization. Economist Alfred Marshal observed in 1890 that "the head of a business must assure himself that his managers, clerks, and foremen are the right men for their work and are doing their work well." (Walker, 1980, p. 4) Therefore, the sophisticated techniques available to management today are a product of evolutionary practices beginning decades ago with

simple, pragmatic, short-term planning. Table 1 traces the historical evolution of human resource planning.<sup>8</sup>

#### B. 1900-1960S PERIOD

Before 1940, the focus of manpower planning was upon the hourly production worker. The general aim of improving efficiency through work engineering was consistent with the need to improve productivity. This led to the introduction of greater objectivity in personnel practices. (Ling, 1965; Merrill, 1959; Yoder, 1952)

During the Second World War and the immediate post-war era, the emphasis on employee productivity was increased. The need for competent managerial personnel was obvious. There was a rampant talent shortage in the background of a significant demand for goods and services. New technologies emerged and interest in the behavioral aspects of work complicated the manpower planning task.

The 1960s saw an expanded need for high-technology programs. In response, manpower planning practices were focused on balancing supply with demand; particularly demand for managerial, professional, and technical personnel.<sup>9</sup> The prevailing view of manpower planning at the time was that

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<sup>8</sup>Walker, James, Human Resource Planning, New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., 1980, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup>Drucker (*ibid*) calls this class of workers as becoming the scarcest, the most expensive, and the most perishable.

TABLE 1. THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

PERIOD AND EMPHASIS	CONDITIONS	TECHNIQUES INTRODUCED
1900-1940		
Work engineering	Search for efficiency in production Labor intensive production Division of labor	Task measurement and simplification Strict worker selection Skill training
Hourly personnel	Professional management emerged	Payroll budget controls
1940-1960		
Productivity and continuity	Talent shortage due to war High demand due to war Automation Job satisfaction Labor movement	Organization charting Management development programs Workload forecasting through use of regression analysis
1960s		
Need to balance supply and demand	Need for highly skilled personnel Rapid organization expansion and diversification Rapid technological change	Intensive college recruitment Career ladders Skills inventories

PERIOD AND EMPHASIS	CONDITIONS	TECHNIQUES INTRODUCED
<b>1960s (cont'd)</b>		
		Formalized forecasting activity Job enrichment and goal-setting Matrix organizations
<b>1970s</b>		
Affirmative action	New labor legislation	Computer based information systems
Salaried worker	Slow business expansion  Concern for the retention and utilization of present staff	Increased emphasis on human resource planning  Human resource analysis linked to organization planning and budgeting  Assessment of human resource costs and benefits  Broadening of management skills to be multi-functional
<b>1980s</b>		
Work and career management	Legislation of personnel practices and administration  Competition among young managers for more levels of responsibility	Job related criteria for personnel decisions  Individual career planning

PERIOD AND EMPHASIS	CONDITIONS	TECHNIQUES INTRODUCED
<b>1980s (cont'd)</b>	<p>Worker demands for participation in management</p> <p>Increased pressures on human resources for cost control and profit contribution</p>	<p>Work analysis as tool for designing jobs, forecasting needs, organization matrices, etc.</p> <p>Flexible work schedules</p> <p>Clarification of management commitment to human resource management</p>
<b>1990s and beyond 2000</b>	<p>Individual autonomy within work organizations</p> <p>Fewer jobs than demanded</p> <p>Political/social demands for worker rights</p>	<p>Restructuring of work situations by the introduction of self-managed work teams</p> <p>Work sharing leading to reduced work week</p> <p>Job matching/career guidance programs in the public sector</p> <p>Introduction of measurement and auditing of human resource changes as part of management accounting</p>

Source: Adapted from James Walker, (1980).

organizations "forecast their needs for manpower into the future, forecast their internal labor supply for meeting these needs, and identify the gaps between what will be needed and what will be available." (Walker, 1980, p. 8). This view has dominated the literature on the subject ever since. The job of manpower planners was viewed as the development of plans for recruiting, selecting, and placing new employees. On top of that, planners had to anticipate the necessary promotions and transfers. (Burack, 1972; Geisler, 1967; Hereman and Selter, 1968; Wikstrom, 1971)

#### C. RESOURCE ALLOCATION: 1970-1980S

Because organizations were operating in environments of resource scarcity, it became necessary to be more conscious of the resources that the organization possessed. Manpower planning was considered a necessary process for the allocation of resources:

Manpower planning has its prime objective the effective utilization of scarce or abundant talent in the interest of the individual employee and the organization. In its broadest sense, it is a matter of anticipating the future business environment and pattern of organization, and relating manpower requirements to these conditions. They are first stated grossly and then further defined in terms of disciplines, skills, and qualifications, all of which are related to time. Realistic plans for recruitment and development of the manpower resource are made after consideration of the external and internal factors affecting the manpower objectives of each organizational unit. (White, 1967)

The 1970s brought increased legislation and regulations regarding human resource planning. New tools like career planning and activity analysis reshaped the work place.

Attention was directed toward updating and refining salary administration practices to ensure competition and motivation at a time when rapid inflation reduced the value of the paycheck. Despite the fact that management attention was being diverted to issues associated with the decade--issues such as the energy crisis, uncertain business prospects, and work-anxieties--manpower planning, now broadly termed human resource planning, became entrenched in both the private and public sectors. The new term, human resource planning, implied a broader scope than simply balancing supply and demand. It also introduced a more comprehensive view of the human resource planning process that included both the needs of forecasting and program planning. In an era of women's liberation, the new term "human resource," also gained favor in avoiding the sexist implication of "manpower." The most important result of the decade, though, was the recognition of personnel planning as a basic corporate function. (Freiburg, 1977)

#### **D. 1990S AND THE WAY AHEAD**

Although there was less new legislation in the 1980s, organizations strengthened their human resource practices. There was pressure from workers to be involved more in the management of their organization. Some organizations responded to this by selling shares to workers so that they could co-own the organization. Once they felt part of the organization, the workers were more likely to plan careers in

their chosen field and the organization was able to better predict staff movements within and outside the organization.

The 1990s did not bring anything radical for manpower planning, as predicted by some theorists. (Dunnette, 1973; Walker, 1980) What actually happened is that those practices considered radical in the 1980s were gladly accepted and became conventional. For example, job sharing, flexible work schedules, and part-time employment are now quite common in the work-place. The public sector, for a long time regarded as an unproductive sector by resource allocation economists, became more directly involved in matching individuals with jobs in the interests of productivity. (Walker, 1980) The predictions of futurists (Miles and Snow, 1984) makes sense that, because of the continued expansion of the work force in the face of limited jobs available, workers and organizations were more likely to take manpower planning more seriously than before.

#### **E. UNDERSTANDING MANAGEMENT**

Since personnel management stems from management as a discipline, our starting point in understanding it should be a brief review of management itself. The traditional view of management has portrayed a manager as someone trying to achieve the goals of an organization through the work of other people. In other words, like the driver of a "tom-cat," he has to control and direct the wheels so that the vehicle moves in

the intended direction. The object of a manager's work in this case, however, is the work force of the organization.

McGregor's Theory X assumes that people are against work and will only labor under the close supervision of some superior authority. He would argue that the workers, left to themselves, will not produce anything positive from the work process. That is to say, if people are left without a central control, they are like a driverless car. The theory assumes that chaos will result from people's unguided activities, as everybody will be managing his or her own affairs and nobody will be responsible for anyone.<sup>10</sup> It is management that makes people realize the objectives of the organization. By bringing together human and material resources and motivating the people in the organization, management is credited with the failure or success of the organization in attaining its intended goals. Management is therefore expected to be creative, innovative, and a dynamic force geared to secure maximum results by the use of limited resources. Ahuja (1986) emotionally calls on personnel managers "to rise to new tangible heights in their intellectual and virtuous plans to visualize the new horizons before them." He expects them to acquire greater knowledge and wisdom to ensure better decisions, insight, perception, and a positive outlook to justify their claim as "drivers" of the organization.

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<sup>10</sup>For a thorough reading of Theory X and Theory Y, see Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960.

#### **F. HUMAN RESOURCE VERSUS PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

As manpower planning was undergoing an unprecedented evolution, so were the terms associated with it. As it went down the historic lane, the discipline gathered various terms and meanings. The traditional view, which typically associates manpower planning with the numbers of people and various jobs, as well as with the means by which these can be predicted and controlled, became simplistic.<sup>11</sup> Contemporary views emphasize the main elements in the process. These are that the courses of action are determined in advance and continually updated with the aim of ensuring that:

1. The demands of the organization for labor be projected as accurately as possible; and
2. That the supply of such labor to the organization is maintained in balance with those demands.

On top of this is the fact that any manpower projections are made in relation to the environment in which the organization finds itself and on the basis of past, present, and projected future information about the organization's demand and supply positions. (Summers, 1988)

Although over time the discipline of management accepted personnel management, manpower management, and human resource management as synonymous, there is a difference in emphasis. Those management theorists who view the areas as the same point to the fact that they all refer to the actions that

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<sup>11</sup>This was in the face of Elton Mayo and the behavioral school of thought which sought, not to discard the classical theories of management, but to improve them.

facilitate the most effective use of people to achieve goals in organizations. (Ivancevich and Glueck, 1988)

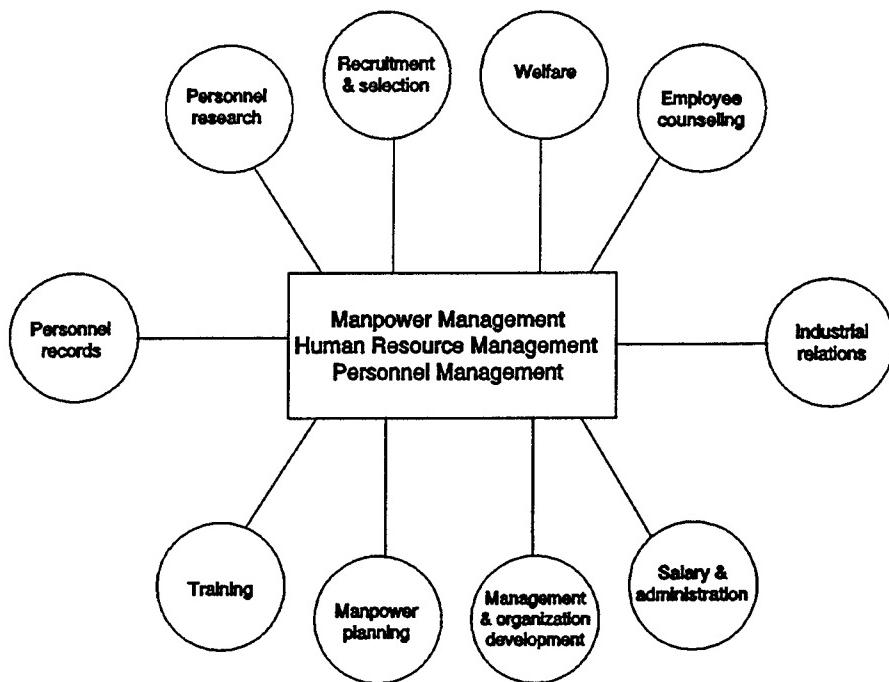
In Human Resource Management (1987), Gerber, Nel, and Van Dyk have convincingly tried to sustain the counter-argument that views human resource management and personnel management as concepts differing in emphasis. To them, personnel management runs through the entire organization, from head of department to supervisor, since these people are all in charge of the staff function at their levels. On the other hand, human resource management, like marketing and finance, is a specialized function that provides back-up services for other managers in the organization to enable them to make optimal use of their subordinates. They see human resource management as having both a macro- and micro-component. For simplicity, this thesis uses the terms human resource management, manpower management, and personnel management interchangeably.

#### **G. THE PERSONNEL FUNCTION**

The varied and diversified nature of management work has clearly cut out the personnel function as a claimant to a status of its own, just like the finance function. In Practical Manpower Planning (1982), Bramham calls personnel "a function closest to the organization's most volatile resource, the only resource that has quite literally a mind of its own."

The work of personnel management pervades the entire organization. In large organizations within either the private or public sector, personnel management activities are

performed by both operating managers and the staff personnel unit. The activities are just as varied as management itself. The function encompasses the activities of recruitment and employment, employee training, manpower deployment, organization planning and development, wage and salary administration, health and safety, benefits and services, union-management relations, personnel research, and manpower planning. Recent additions to this endless list are supervision, work group behavior, communication, and managing change. (Beach, 1987, pp. 76-80) Figure 2 summarizes all the important activities.

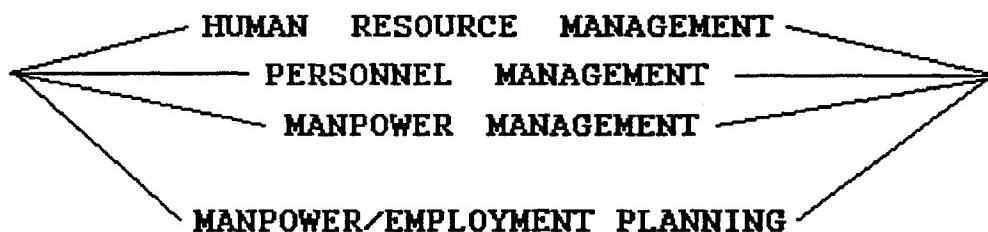


**Figure 2. Human Resource Management Activities**

Every personnel manager accepts the fact that the most critical of all resources available are those related directly to the human beings who work under him or her. Without a team

of competent people at all levels, an organization will either pursue inappropriate goals or find it difficult to achieve appropriate goals once they have been set. For any organization, nothing is more important and deserves more attention than the people who supply it with their work, talent, creativity, and drive. A leading American industrialist could not have been more correct when he remarked that "we do not manufacture automobiles, airplanes, radios and televisions but we manufacture men and they in turn manufacture the goods."

(Ahuja, 1983, p. 82)



As economists identified the various factors of production, so did personnel managers realize a need to maintain harmony between those factors of production, especially the principal ones, namely capital and work force. One of the

most important results of the 1980s is that good industrial relations emerged to be, by far, the greatest asset to any organization. This was so because labor, as a unit of production, coordinates all other factors toward more production and lesser cost resulting in more profits. In an article, Designing Strategic Human Resource Systems, Miles and Snow (1984) argue that two phenomena have recently caused organizations in the public sector to focus renewed attention on the personnel function and, in fact, to give it added status. First, efficient competition from private sector organizations has led the public sector to seek to improve human resource management systems as a means of improving organization performance. Second, the growing high-technology, service-based economies are making human resource management even more crucial for organizational success.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Miles and Snow in Designing Strategic Human Resource Systems an article the Organizational Dynamics journal, Volume 13, No. 1, 1984.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. INTRODUCTION

There is a growing body of literature on the subject of human resource management. This is largely due to the increasing importance of the subject in organizations. The work force is now regarded as the most valuable asset to the organization because it has the potential to disrupt all other factors geared for the success of organizational goals. It is interesting to note, however, that despite the large patronage on the subject, theorists differ in their interpretations of manpower planning. For example, some theorists regard manpower planning as a parallel activity to human resource management while others have argued that manpower planning is only one aspect among the many other activities of human resource management.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, others have urged personnel managers to give manpower planning an extra measure of importance above other manpower activities. This chapter considers these contrasting views from the relevant literature to reveal the good and bad aspects of manpower planning. At the end, particular consideration is directed at the rather

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<sup>13</sup>The other activities of human resource management are employee counselling, industrial relations, personnel research, recruitment and selection, training and welfare, and salary and administration.

scanty literature that focuses on personnel management in the African context.

Table 2 shows the controversial weighing of the manpower planning function.<sup>14</sup> The table shows the weights being given to the various human resource activities by the current trend of debate on the subject. The first view of human resource management sees manpower planning as three times more important than the second view. Both first and second views regard industrial relations, for example, with the same weight. This is to say that none of the views regard it with any measure of extra importance above other activities. Advocates of the first view are marked by their emphasis of the fact that manpower planning is more important to all other manpower activities. As a result, the activity should demand more of the personnel manager's time than other activities, a position that is sharply contradicted by the argument of the second view.

#### B. CONTEMPORARY VIEWS

Bramham argues that manpower planning should not be given an equal weight with other human resource management activities since it is more critical than others. He notes that in recent years, the climate of manpower management has changed dramatically, resulting in a greater appreciation of the subject. Although the techniques and tools available to the

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<sup>14</sup>The number of weights represent how important the function is ranked against the other listed.

personnel executives have not altered substantially, there has been a greater need to understand and tackle the problems of economies that have relatively low wages, but high unit wage costs, poor investment record, and poor productivity, such as the Third World. Bramham argues that more emphasis should be placed on the thorough identification of manpower issues rather than the obsessive adherence to mechanisms and technicalities, "which have become the refuge of the many who seek the ideal of the right forecast." (Bramham, 1987)

TABLE 2. CONTROVERSIAL WEIGHING OF MANPOWER PLANNING

ACTIVITY	FIRST VIEW WEIGHT	SECOND VIEW WEIGHT
Recruitment and selection	I	I
Employee counseling	I	I
Industrial relations	I	I
Manpower planning	III	I
Personnel research and records	I	I
Salary and administration	I	I
Training and welfare	I	I

Source: Adapted from Gerber, Nel, and Van Dyk (1987)

Thus, Bramham represents the first view of manpower planning in relation to human resource management. His argument is that manpower planning emerged to facilitate the management of materials, money, and men. As such, it is parallel to market planning, production management, financial control, and business administration, but not to any other

manpower activity. Manpower planning, he argues, is not so much a new personnel discipline but a new approach to personnel management that aims to add a further dimension to the management of people at work.

In 1970, Bramham undertook a survey to discover the areas in which personnel practitioners concentrated their efforts in the British public sector.<sup>15</sup> The amount of attention given each activity was ranked from 1 to 10 with each extreme representing the highest and lowest ranking, respectively. The survey was distributed again to the same organizations in 1977, and the results were compared to discover any interesting trends or changes. Table 3 shows these comparisons.

TABLE 3. CHANGING STATUS OF MANPOWER PLANNING

SURVEY ACTIVITIES	1970	1977
Employee counseling	7	8
Industrial relations	3	1
Management & organization development	8	3
Manpower planning	9	2
Personnel records	2	9
Personnel research	10	7
Recruitment & selection	1	6
Salary administration	6	5
Training	4	4
Welfare	5	10

Source: Adapted from Bramham (1986)

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<sup>15</sup>Details about the research can be found in the Institute of Personnel Management Survey, and the Branch Survey (1977) by John Bramham and Morris Lea.

The 1970 survey suggested that personnel managers spent a great deal of their time on operational matters. They recruited the employees at the time they needed them and trained the people who needed training when they needed it. Unlike the 1977 survey, the earlier survey reflects little or no thought with respect to future needs. To a certain degree, the same observation can be discerned from the 1977 survey; however, a changing attitude is apparent. Forward-looking starts to be an acceptable factor. Activities that are being given priority are future-oriented. They assist long-term development of the organization. Industrial relations, manpower planning, management, and organization development or training, for example, prepare the organization for the future. It is interesting to note in Table 3 the way manpower planning moved from 9 to 2, reflecting trends of changing attitudes over seven years as the activity fought for recognition. The same concern has been noted by Drucker when he criticized personnel professionals for being "fire fighters" with little or no concern for the future development and problems of the organization. (Drucker, 1982)

Beach, a renowned personnel management theorist, regards the management of people at work as an integral part of the process of management. Unlike Bramham, he regards personnel management as being at the "heart of management." Personnel management is not something that can be assigned solely to the personnel management department. His argument is that getting

out production and managing people are inseparable. In other words, there must be a partnership between the personnel specialist and the operating manager. (Beach, 1975)

Beach emphasizes that the employment function of the personnel department encompasses many areas, including manpower planning, recruitment, selection and placement, performance appraisal and evaluation, transfers, promotions, layoffs and separation. Manpower planning is thus being equated to any of the personnel management activities, an argument that represents a second view of manpower planning. His view is that, while personnel management is made up of many components, manpower planning is only one of them. Beach's argument is that manpower planning requires the supportive roles of all the other activities and should not claim superior status. For example, manpower planning would have to rely heavily on the collection and analysis of personnel data pertaining to the volume and kind of organization work. These data are only obtained through the personnel research function. Also, inputs and decisions from both the staff personnel unit and from operating departments are required to develop a viable manpower plan. In doing the recruitment and selection functions, the personnel unit is essentially providing a centralized service for the rest of the organization. In carrying out the performance appraisal and the personnel changes of status activities, the personnel

unit serves in a planning, coordinative, and control role, giving credence to the fact that it is equally important.

Unlike Bramham, Beach thus regards manpower planning as having no extra measure of importance over other activities. "They are the same" he would declare, and in their equal importance, they support each other for the survival of human resource management. Apart from this declared view of manpower planning, Beach regards it not as an ad hoc activity, but as a systematic process that has its own vital components. Such components glorify the systems approach to manpower planning, which Beach's scholars would later argue is the only way of making personnel management effective in the public sector.<sup>16</sup>

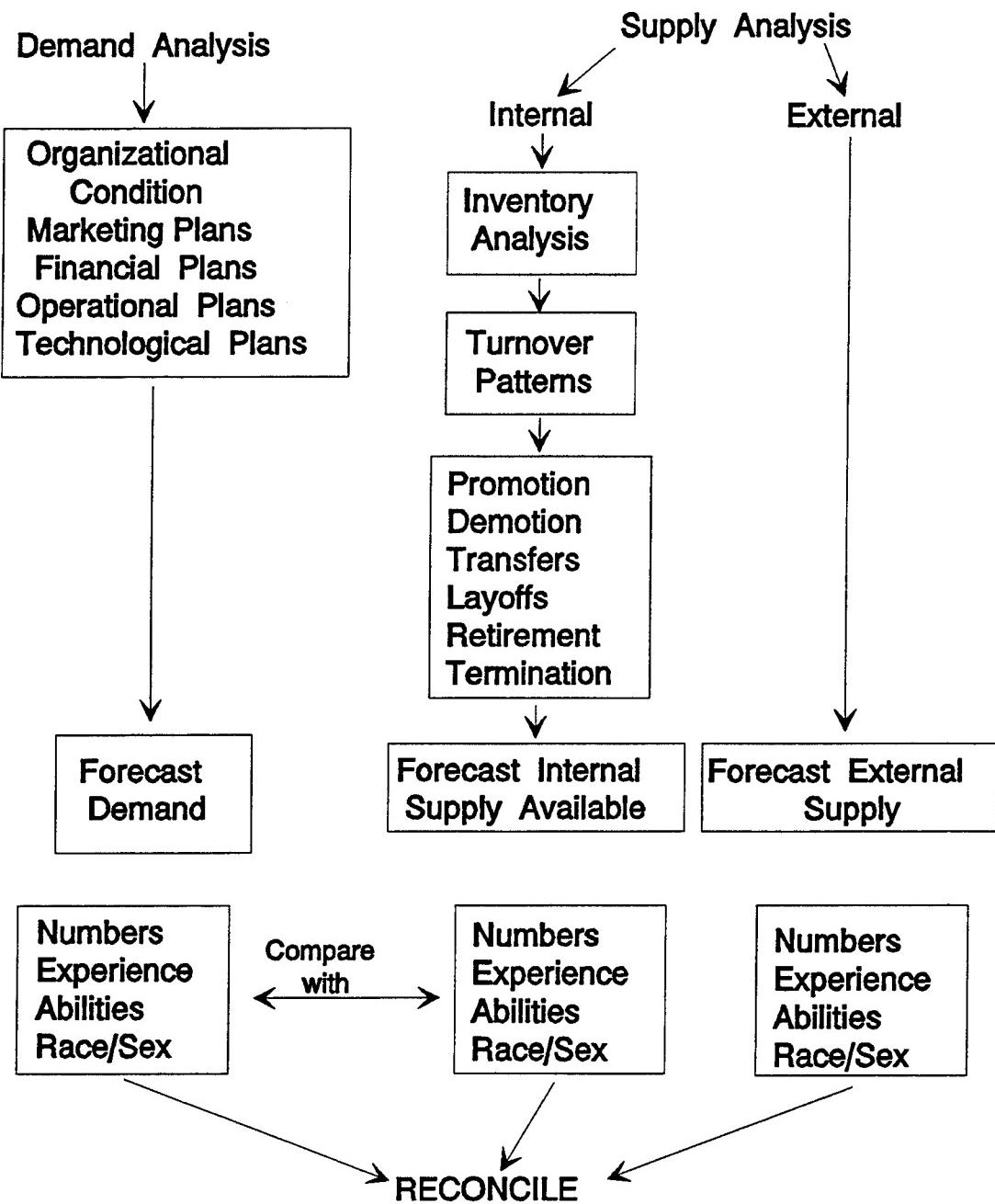
### **1. A Diagnostic Approach**

An interesting perspective of manpower planning is offered by Milkovich and Glueck in Personnel\Human Resource Management: A Diagnostic Approach (1987). Although the authors were writing for private sector organizations, they offer a simplified version of the process of manpower planning, which could be applicable to any organization. Figure 3 shows that process.

The authors call the process "employment" planning, which for our purposes will be equated to manpower or human

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<sup>16</sup>The arguments of Mansoor, Nasir and his group in their Syndicate project on Manpower Planning for a Modern Manager (1987) are explored below.



**Figure 3. Employment Planning Process Model**

Source: Adapted from Milkovich and Glueck (1985)

resource planning. They define the process as the identification of future needs for employees both in terms of quantity and quality. The process compares the future needs with the present work force and determines the numbers and types of employee to be recruited or phased out based on the organization's strategies and objectives. The main reasons for a formal manpower plan are three-fold. It is meant to achieve:

1. More effective and efficient use of human resources.
2. More satisfied and more developed employees.
3. More effective equal employment opportunity planning.

Milkovich and Glueck (1985) regard manpower planning as more important than any other human resource activity because it precedes them. For, how can you recruit, they argue, when you do not know the number of people you need in the future? Also, how can you select effectively when you do not know the kind of workers you need for a job operation? Even before a training program is worked out, one would need to know the quality and size of the group. In fact, a careful analysis of all human resource activities shows that their effectiveness depends on answers to questions about how many people, with what talents, are required. Their arguments are thus quite similar to Bramham's position on the need for manpower planning.

The importance of manpower planning can be seen in many ways. However, the most important view according to

Glueck (1974) is that it provides a link between the organization's conditions and the management of other personnel activities. It is through manpower planning that managers can diagnose changes in the firm's strategic directions, financial conditions, and technology to integrate them into human resource decisions.<sup>17</sup> Glueck adds that manpower planning, formally executed, not only links the organization and the environment, but also integrates personnel decisions and focuses them toward employee and organization effectiveness. (Glueck, 1974)

As a conclusion derived from their extensive research, Milkovich and Glueck (1985) point out that employees who work for an organization that takes pride in formal manpower planning maintain a different character than in other organizations. These employees have a better chance to participate in planning their own careers and even to share in training and development activities. As a result, they are more likely to feel that their talents are important to the employer and they have a better chance to be placed in a job that uses their talents. This is bound to lead to greater employee satisfaction and may influence employee work behavior such as absenteeism, lower turnover, or fewer work accidents. (Hillard, 1988)

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<sup>17</sup>An article, Personnel Planning at IBM: The Integration of Resources and Business Planning, written by the Corporate Personnel Department, 1983.

An issue that is not currently taken seriously in many Third World public sectors, equal employment opportunity (EEO), also requires effective human resource planning. A forward-looking employment plan should focus managers' attention on the treatment of minorities and women. In the United States, where there are strict government regulations on EEO, data collected routinely during sound employment planning would be required for government reports. As a result, manpower planning enhances employers' ability to comply with government regulations. Even when dealing with EEO, the personnel manager has to do some form of forecasting of what he or she needs in the way of manpower and how it is going to be supplied.

**a. Demand and Supply Forecast**

In all manpower planning efforts, predicting the future is central. There has to be a systematic way of forecasting future trends in manpower movements if the supply and demand predictions are to approximate reality.

Organizations use different demand and supply forecast methods. The "bottom line" for all methods is to compare the two sides after a systematic consideration of a number of factors, as shown in Figure 4.

**b. Human Resource Demand Analysis**

Headquarters can forecast total demand for the entire organization. This is also called the top-bottom approach. (Milkovich and Glueck, 1987) Alternatively,

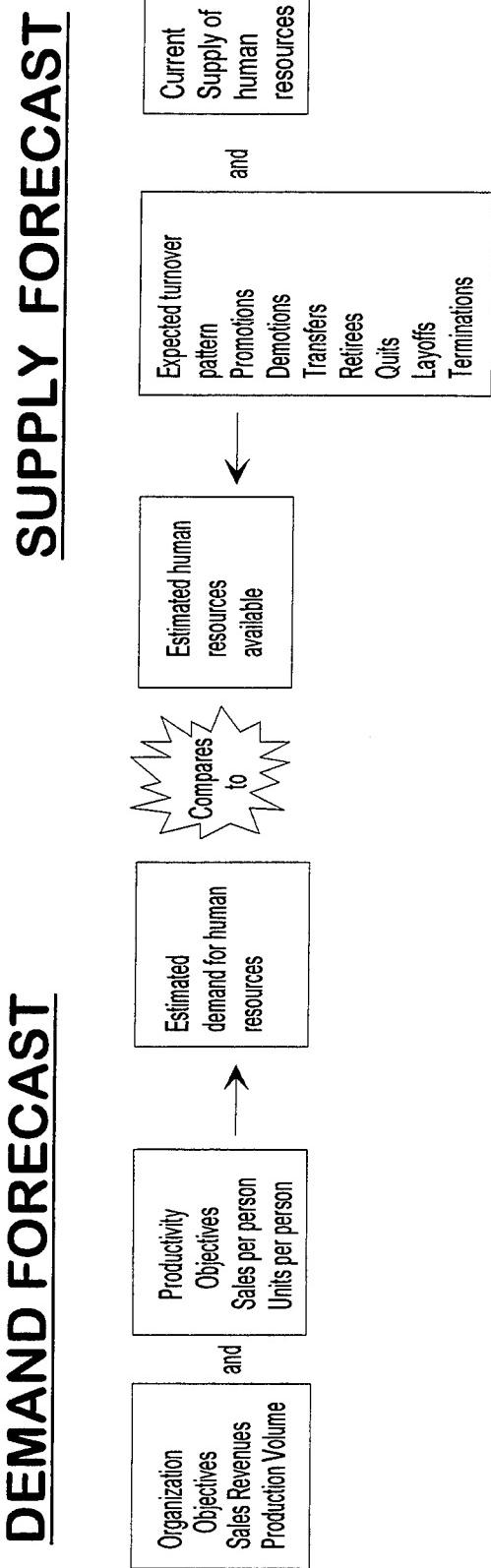


Figure 4. Employment Planning Process  
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Source: Adapted from Milkovich and Glueck (1985)

individual departments can forecast their own requirements, which are then added up to get total demand. This can be called the bottom-up approach. (Milkovich and Glueck, 1987) In reality, however, a combination of the two approaches is typically practiced.

Many authors on the subject agree that forecasting manpower demand, like any process of predicting the future, is more of an art than a science. As interest in the subject of manpower planning increased over the years, models and formulas to assist the process were formulated. But these cannot surpass the importance of the planner's head in estimating future personnel requirements.

The private sector relies heavily on gross sales, revenue, or production volume in forecasting manpower demand. Unlike the public sector, output in the private sector is easily quantifiable. Indeed, estimating the relationship between demand for human resources and output has remained a perpetual challenge for public sector personnel managers. The actual difficulty lies in getting good measures of each of the variables of concern for the public sector. Despite this, Milkovich and Glueck (1987) present a simple method applicable to both the private and public sectors. Figure 5 shows such a method.

The number of employees demanded for the future is always a function of the estimated revenue for that period and

CURRENT YEAR	PLAN YEAR ESTIMATE	PLAN YEAR ESTIMATE
	No Change in Productivity	7% Productivity/ Improvement
Revenue	\$120 million	\$150 million
Present Employees	857	
Productivity (Revenue per Employee)	\$140,000	\$140,000
Employees Required	1071	1001

Figure 5. Human Resource Demand Forecast

the future goals of the organization.<sup>18</sup> In the example in Figure 5, the current year revenue is \$120 million. To get the productivity of each worker, that figure is divided by the number of workers ( $\$120 \text{ million} \div 857 = \$140,000$ ). The example shows two forecasts: the first uses the current year's productivity figure; and the second uses 7 percent estimated productivity improvement goal for the future ( $\$140,000 \times 107\% = 149,800$  revenue per employee). With the increased productivity, 1,001 employees ( $\$150 \text{ million} \div 149,800 = 1,001$ ) are required. Note that this is 70 employees less than without the productivity improvement goal. If the salary bill were \$20,000 per employee, then the savings generated by the productivity improvement would equal \$1.40 million ( $\$20,000 \times 70$ ).

### c. Human Resource Supply Analysis

Supply analysis considers two sources of human resources. These are external (available in the labor market) and internal (available in the organization). Both of these are analyzed not only for the numbers of people available but also for factors including abilities, interests, and work experience.

Supply analysis begins with an internal inventory of human resources. This is a count of people and skills currently employed. Next, the planner projects the current

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<sup>18</sup>According to the Zimbabwean public sector operations, a saving on a budgetary allocation represents revenue.

supply into the future in an attempt to estimate what human resources will be available internally during the plan year. The current internal supply undergoes a lot of changes in the form of promotion, retirement, transfer, or quitting. Forecasting future supplies involves estimating this movement in the work force and adjusting the projected supply accordingly.

(Dyer, 1980)

#### d. Internal Inventory

To assist in the task of human resource analysis, the internal skills inventory situation is very important. In its simplest form, skills inventory is a list of names, certain characteristics, or skills of the people working for the organization. In many organizations, this information is buried in personal files and is not readily available because it is not presented in a systematic manner. Time and effort would be needed to retrieve it. Third World public sector organizations have a particular problem in this regard because their records are not computerized. Thus, the task of personnel records would tend to occupy much of the personnel manager's working time. The time reserved for personnel planning therefore becomes minimal.

Good skills inventories enable the organization to determine quickly and expeditiously what kinds of people with specific skills are presently available. This information is useful when an organization decides to expand or to work on new strategies. It is also useful for planning, for training,

management development, promotion, transfer, or any related personnel activities. The importance of constantly updating this data bank for accuracy cannot be over-emphasized.

**e. Designing Skills Inventory System**

Although organizations differ in what they call relevant data for skills inventory, the following basic data should always be included:

- Name of employee.
- Employee code number.
- Present location.
- Date of birth.
- Date of employment.
- Job classification.
- Prior experience.
- History of work experience in the organization.
- Specific skills and knowledge.
- Education/professional qualifications.
- Field of education (formal/informal).
- Knowledge in foreign language.
- Health.
- Salary range.
- Employee's stated career goals/objectives.
- Work geographical preference.
- Date of retirement.

The U.S. Civil Service has a skills inventory for individuals above GS 14 (middle management). The information

in the data bank allows the U.S. Government to examine age distributions by such factors as educational attainment, mobility, and reasons for entering or leaving the service. However, because the US public sector has gone a long way towards computerization, such data are readily available in usable form for analysis. Smith points out several uses of such a system:

A carefully prepared skills inventory can be used as a basis for a long-range personnel planning and development by providing precise definitions of the aptitudes and abilities available and needed by the organization. It can be used to assist in the evaluation of growth potential of the present executive work force and help identify group strengths and weaknesses for future recruiting strategies.... Most importantly, it may serve as a motivating device by demonstrating through written feedback that the organization has a systematic approach to personal data utilization and that it is eager to develop each employee to full potential.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps, one of the most controversial considerations of manpower planning is described by Robbins (1984), who starts off with an attack on public administrators. His argument is that any analysis of manpower planning must have general administration as a starting point. He accuses public administrators (public sector workers) of lacking the basic techniques to anticipate change. Because they lack anticipative behavior, they are forced to react to change rather than to plan for it. Having anticipative behavior implies both a reasonable knowledge of the future and the willingness to take

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<sup>19</sup>Robert Smith, "Information Systems for More Effective Use of Executive Resources," Personnel Journal, June 1969, pp. 452-65.

risks. Robbins confirms the already existing evidence that administrators cannot predict the future very accurately nor are they inclined to accept risks.<sup>20</sup> This is consistent with the generally accepted description of modern administration as a situation where one has inadequate information but wants to minimize risks while attempting to satisfy organizational objectives.<sup>21</sup>

In human resource planning, the administrator is attempting to determine the right numbers at the right places at the right times. Such planning includes the forecasting and construction of succession, management development, and personnel information systems. According to Robbins, the process of planning assists the administrator in identifying critical personnel issues of the future that may affect plans for expansion and guide the orderly phasing out or retaining people already employed by the organization. In other words, it is a quick guide to short-term personnel activities such as recruiting, orientation, development, and compensation policies. Robbins sees human resource planning as a basic tool for line management. Of necessity, it demands accurate worker data and the coordination of the management development function. (Robbins, 1984)

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<sup>20</sup>In his book, Principles of Management, J. R. Robert stresses the same point.

<sup>21</sup>The following authors confirm the same point: Wexley (1984), Burack (1984), Stoner and Wankel (1986).

## 2. Systems Approach

Robbins' view of manpower planning is supported by Nasir Mansoor, in his syndicate project on Manpower Planning for a Modern Manager.<sup>22</sup> However, Mansoor goes further to split manpower planning into four basic pillars on which the process rests. These components are:

1. Investigation;
2. Forecasting;
3. Planning and Control; and
4. Implementation.

### a. Investigation

This refers to the need to undertake a manpower inventory. The process should start from a tabulation and careful analysis of the current human resources in the organization in terms of its opportunities and problems, composition, deployment and utilization, etc. The effectiveness of planning as a tool for personnel management depends on the detail and accuracy of the information upon which it is based. Information regarding jobs, employees, vacancies, recruits, promotions, and absenteeism is essential. Payroll records are the best sources of such information.

It is essential that a personnel manager develop systems and controls that increase the likelihood of the environment being controlled to a reasonable extent. The

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<sup>22</sup>The article appears in the Journal Royal Institute of Public Administration, RIPA London, April 1988.

external environment consists of the existing supply of labor, government action, and education trends. Manpower planning is viewed as an integral part of corporate planning. Thus, sales forecasts, production targets, financial stability, position of competitors, and changes in the external environment become relevant factors in the whole process. In manpower planning, the social responsibility of the organization must also be fully considered.

**b. Forecasting**

This refers to the need to analyze manpower requirements and supply. Manpower planning involves the forecasting of likely future situations with the object of identifying manpower demands and determining actions that, as far as possible, can help the organization meet those demands. Obviously, no forecasts can be completely accurate, but reasonable estimates of probability can be made on the basis of various hypotheses. Thus, the value of the plan will always depend on just how close such forecasts can be brought in relation to actual trends in the future. Because of the need for accurate information, personnel management relies heavily on manpower planning. Poor record-keeping systems cause manpower planning to be inaccurate. This is the root cause of over- and under-staffing in many public sector organizations.

Several academic reports have indicated that the aspect of forecasting is poorly demonstrated in the Zimbabwean

public sector.<sup>23</sup> As a result, overmanning is causing serious problems of high labor costs, low profit margins<sup>24</sup> and low customer satisfaction. The current economic structural adjustment program (ESAP) is partly aimed at redressing this anomaly.

**c. Planning and Control**

Manpower planning should be prepared on the basis of analysis of manpower requirements and a study of the implications of the information on productivity and costs. It should clarify responsibilities for implementation and control and establish reporting procedures that will allow the monitoring of achievements. The purpose of planning and control is to turn forecasts into coherent and interrelated policies designed to achieve the organization's manpower objectives.

Planning and control are concerned with the monitoring, recruitment, training, industrial relations, manpower costs, organization development, redundancy and physical, and planning for requirements of the worker.

**d. Utilization and Implementation**

This phase of manpower planning is where the success of an organization's policies is measured. Once the

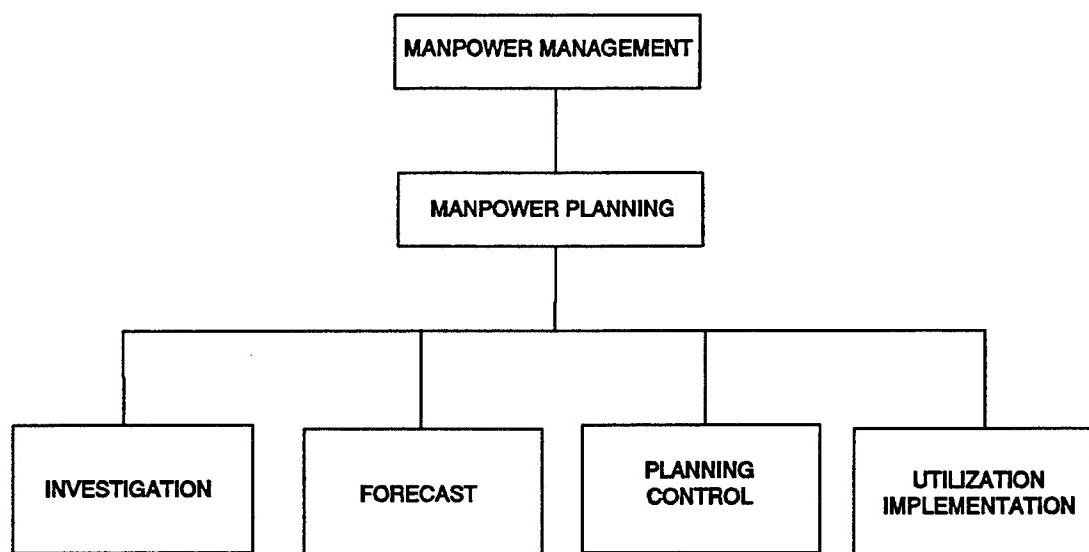
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<sup>23</sup>Commentaries in the national tabloid Sunday Mail (5/7/90) and Institute of Personnel Management Journal, April 1991.

<sup>24</sup>According to the Zimbabwean government a saving on a budget allocation item represents profit for the department.

policies are better implemented, proper utilization should follow. Reduced costs may not be the objective if falling production or poor service to the customer/client is the result.

Figure 6 illustrates the relationship of the four pillars to manpower planning. Their strengths have to be felt equally if they are to build a strong planning process with meaning to human resource management.



**Figure 6. The Four Pillars of Manpower Planning**

### **3. African Perspective**

Perhaps, the most relevant treatment of personnel management to developing countries is that offered by Blunt and Popoola (1985).<sup>25</sup> The authors review the developments and major characteristics of conventional personnel management

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<sup>25</sup>Their book, Personnel Management in Africa, was written for the Modern Management in Africa series.

and consider how they might be modified to suit African conditions. Personnel management is portrayed as one of the most crucial and challenging areas of modern management, particularly in the public sector where its practice is subject to a lot of environmental constraints. The authors note that the reason why personnel management in Africa maintains a distinctive position from that of Europe or America is the apparent lack of "muscle" among the African trade unions. Their Western counterparts have the improvement of the quality of working life as their constant responsibility. However, the African personnel manager is urged to stand up to the challenge of such a situation since meaningful, humanized work and self respect remain just as important to the African worker. (Blunt and Popoola, 1985)

In their review of the subject, Blunt and Popoola view management as a wide area encompassing many fields. They criticize traditional concerns of management for first ignoring personnel management in praise of its other facets. Later, as they note, it became clear that the personnel function could not be ignored or sidelined. The basis of scientific management also forms the foundation of much of modern personnel management. Its claim to being an area of management in which it was possible to observe the application

of scientific management gave it an added status over other fields of management.<sup>26</sup>

While manpower planning is viewed as essential in African personnel management, Blunt and Popoola describe it as a set of intuition rules hardly taken seriously. No systematic approach is given to its application, hence its failure to act as a vital "engine" to successful personnel management.

In the African context, the situation has been worsened by persistent accusations of corruption. Practices of favoritism and nepotism will remain permanent legacies of any organization and are bound to affect its efficiency. Although, the hard evidence is not available to measure its level, Blunt and Popoola note that the continued belief that it occurs is of concern. Favoritism, especially in promotions, does a disservice to the whole concept of manpower planning. Any efforts to revise recruitment, promotion, discipline, and grievance procedures must seek to maintain an appropriate balance between efficient procedures and safeguards against allegations of, or actual, favoritism. Where corruption actually takes place, the gathering of useful personnel data for the sake of efficient manpower management systems becomes an academic exercise; and this is what is happening in Africa. (Blunt and Popoola, 1985) However, the authors develop a useful model of manpower planning that could be employed in both the private and public sectors. It could

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<sup>26</sup>These views are in sharp contrast to those of Bramham (1982), as discussed above.

conveniently be described as a "checklist" for all personnel officers. Figure 7 shows this model.

### C. CONCLUSION

Personnel management has an inter-disciplinary nature and is derived from many disciplines, including sociology, law, economics, and engineering. With the advent of Taylorist concepts of scientific management, personnel management looked to other fields from which it could borrow. For example, it relies heavily on psychology, particularly industrial and organizational psychology. It has benefited from the findings of rigorous investigations into such issues as the selection, training of personnel, and performance appraisal, while industrial psychology has gained feedback from the real world on the practical applicability of its basic research. (Miner, 1969)

Because of the unpredictable nature of African management, a different approach has to be adopted with regard to manpower planning. In some organizations it will work well and prove to be a worthwhile activity, while other organizations may find that the contingencies they face make manpower planning useful only occasionally. Thus, Blunt and Popoola's recommendation of a contingency approach makes sense. Personnel managers need to weigh their own peculiar organizational circumstances before deciding on a particular course of action. Ultimately, there will be variations with respect to factors such as the organization's environment, its diversity,

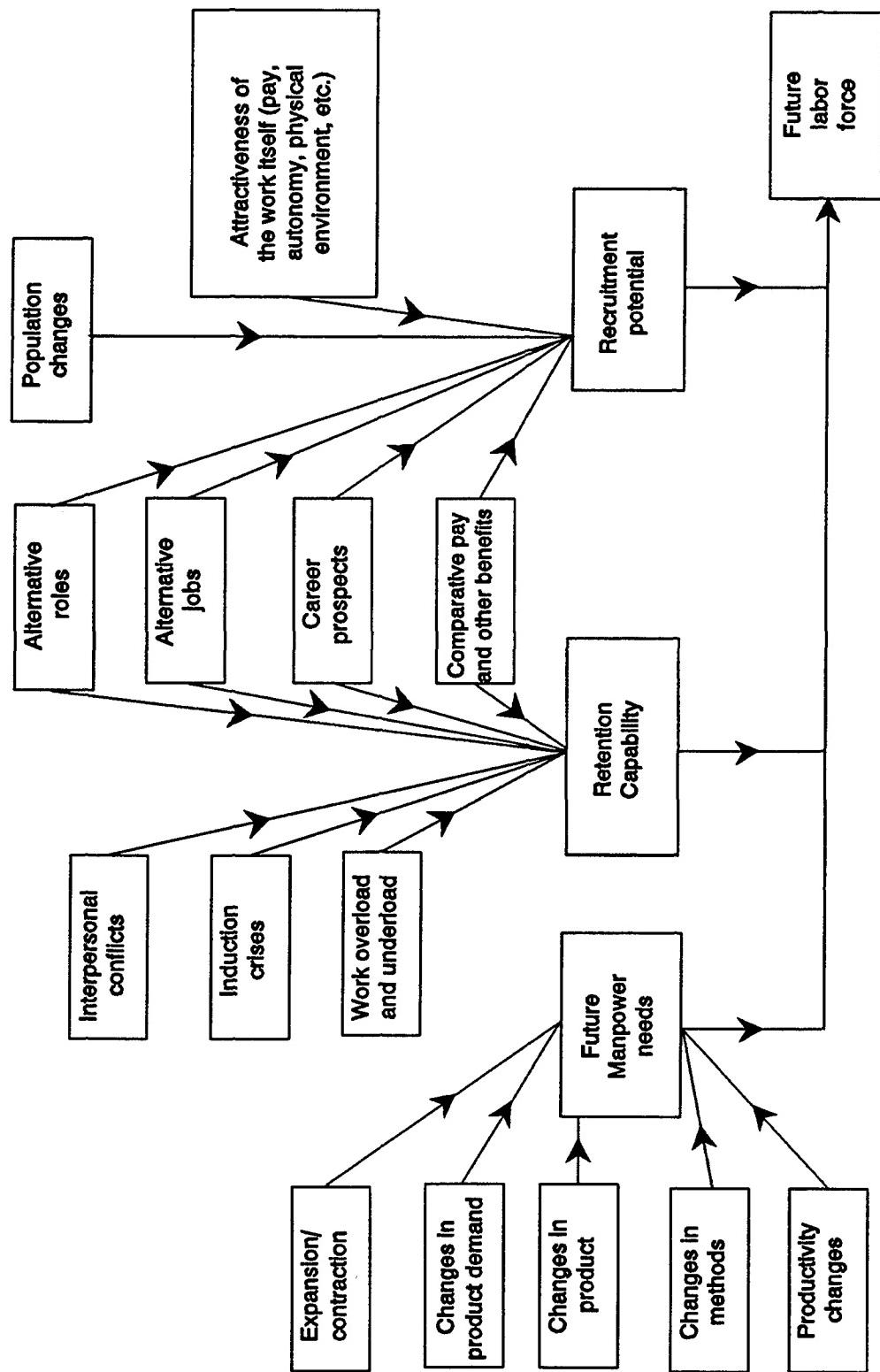


Figure 7. African Manpower Planning Model

its size, the technology it employs, and the characteristics of its labor force (Child, 1977).

#### IV. CASE STUDY: MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

The relationship between each Zimbabwe government ministry to the central ministry (the Ministry of the Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare) has already been described.<sup>27</sup> All the ministries are basically structured the same with minor differences that relate to the peculiarity of their functions. On one side there is the administrative cadre, which is associated with policy making in government, while on the other there is the executive cadre charged with the execution of policy. The promotion paths for the two sides are different and personnel rarely move from one side to the other after entering public service. This chapter examines the structure of the Ministry of Defense and its relation to the manpower practices in that ministry. Despite its comparatively small size, the problems encountered and the intricacies involved are typical of all other ministries.<sup>28</sup>

In terms of numbers, the Ministry of Defense is one of the smallest in the Zimbabwean public sector. It is made up of three departments: Administration and Planning, Finance and Procurement, and Research and Development. Each department is

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<sup>27</sup>See Chapter I, page 8.

<sup>28</sup>The Defense Forces are not regarded as part of the Ministry of Defense for manpower planning purposes.

headed by a Deputy Secretary who reports directly to the Permanent Secretary for Defense.<sup>29</sup>

#### A. ORGANIZATION MATRIX

The organizational matrix of the Ministry of Defense can be presented as follows:

##### 1. Structure

Typical of a "machine bureaucracy," this can be divided into five components.<sup>30</sup> Since the ministry is composed of the civilian sector, which services the Defense Forces, and the defense force sector, which does the actual defense of the nation, the demarcation of the five components is easily discernable. They are:

###### a. Strategic Apex

This consists of the Joint Council on Defense and Security (JCD) and the Defense Council. The Minister of Defense and his Permanent Secretary stand prominent in both these forums. The forums deal with defense policy issues and the way the Ministry of Defense should operate to realize the objectives of the defense policy. The Permanent Secretary's

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<sup>29</sup>The Secretary for a ministry is its administrative head. He reports to the political head of that Ministry, the Minister whose equivalence in the American context would be the Secretary of a department. The Zimbabwean Secretary for a ministry is non-political and can serve several governments without being affected by change-overs; hence, his "permanent" status.

<sup>30</sup>For more reading about machine bureaucracies, refer to Henry Mintzberg's article "Organization Design: Fashion and Fit?" found in 'Managing People and Organizations' (1992) by John Gabarro.

presence in both forums is very relevant. He has to actively participate in the policy-making process whose implementation he still will preside over through middleman forums. He possesses the general responsibility of ensuring that efficiency and good administration are exercised within the defense forces. As such, he is generally responsible for the human resource needs of the entire ministry.

**b. Middle Line**

This includes the Defense Coordinating Committee and Senior Staff Meeting of the ministry. Both are chaired by the Permanent Secretary, who has to ensure that the policy aspects he would have discussed with the Strategic Apex are conveniently passed down to the operatives. Particular members in these forums will have to ensure that their respective departments are properly staffed to carry out the policies that emanate from the Strategic Apex. It is at this point that serious manpower considerations are made in terms of the optimal level of personnel required to carry out the various tasks effectively.

**c. Operating Core**

Considering that the objectives of the ministry hinge around the need to provide defense and security for the nation from internal and external aggression, the soldiers become the operational core. Their efforts in preparedness for war are a direct attempt to meet the objectives of the ministry. In combat or patrol, their work can be viewed as

turning inputs into outputs for the organization in terms of the services they provide.

**d. Supporting Staff**

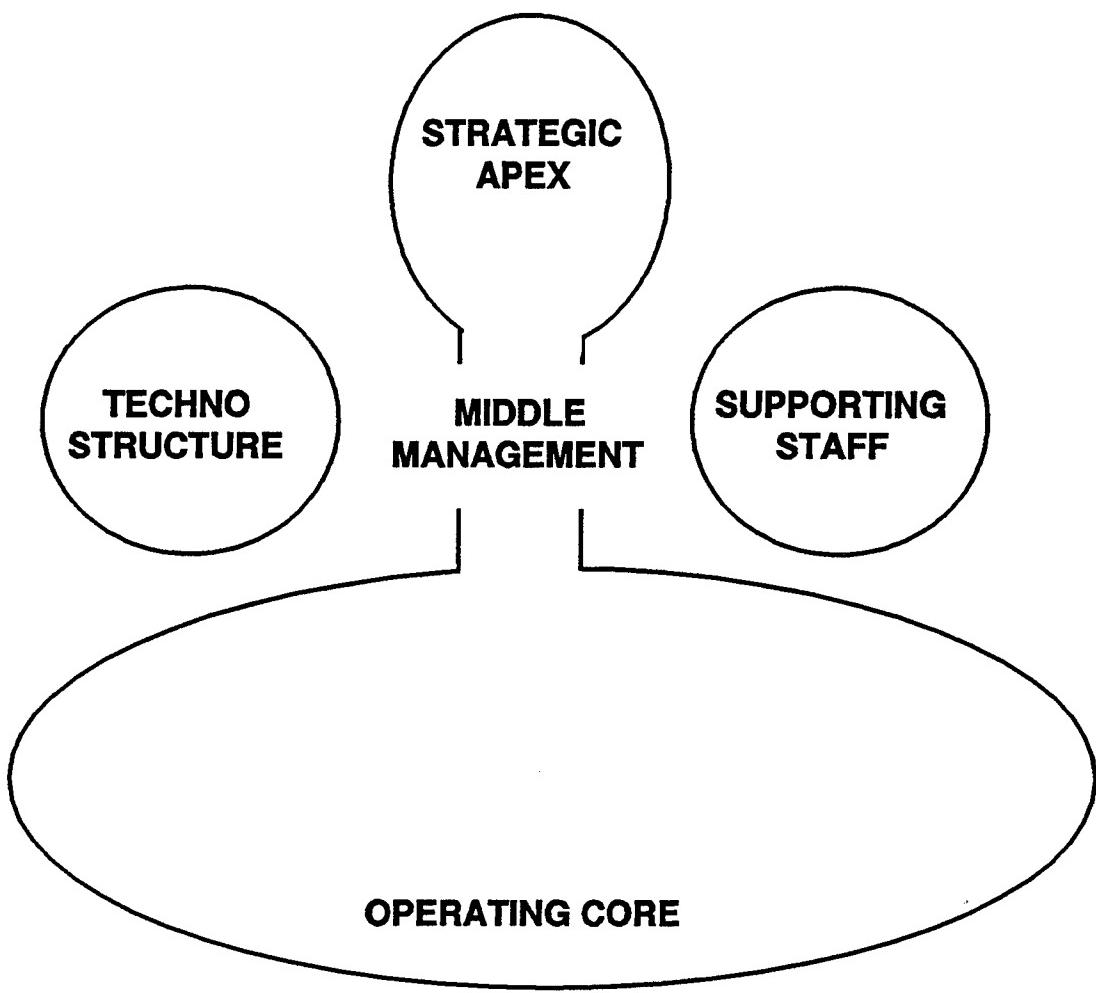
This group provides the supporting services to ensure that the overall objectives of the ministry are achieved. It includes the civilians and the military working together. One finds the typing pool for the Defense Forces, for example, staffed with civilians. Computer operators, the registry department, the logistics department, accounts, and, especially, the personnel department are all sections that provide what the soldier needs to operate effectively. The Personnel department particularly transcends all other departments. Based on the information it receives from the other departments, it has to ensure that all parts of the ministry are properly staffed to carry out the existing tasks. More importantly, it has to ensure the projected manpower requirements of all departments are adequately met for the organization's future operations.

**e. Technostructure**

These are highly-trained people positioned within a semi-detached situation to the ministry. They are supposed to plan, design, and train people who do the work and set standards for operation. The Ministry of Defense relies heavily on these people, especially foreign "experts," who are attached to the defense forces as trainers and advisers. These foreign experts ensure that acceptable standards for a

modern army are being observed. Internal and external auditors fall in this category. They lay down generally accepted rules of financial operation for the ministry. However, the ministry is only responsible for the adequate staffing of the internal auditors who advise the Permanent Secretary on a day-to-day basis on financial matters. As the scope of the responsibilities and budget of the ministry increases, there needs to be enough auditors to handle the expansion.

A large hierarchy emerges in the middle line to oversee the specialized work of the operating core. The middle management is structured on a functional basis all the way to the Strategic Apex, where real power lies. Together however, they decide on manpower requirements for the whole ministry. In whatever they do, however, they rely heavily on the technostructure to design and maintain the systems of standardization. By virtue of the organization's dependence on these systems, the technostructure holds a high degree of informal power. The organizational structure will ultimately determine the number of people to be recruited. The environment of the public sector is very transient, which is not good for an organization that does not adapt to new conditions easily. This factor also has a strong impact on manpower planning. Supported by a huge support staff, the ministry tries to stabilize the environment in which it is working. Figure 8 presents the relationship in a diagram.



**Figure 8. Machine Bureaucracy**

Source: Gabarro (1992) Structural Components of the Defense Ministry

## 2. Network

The ministry maintains an inter-ministerial network that ensures the efficient coordination of the whole. For example, the Joint Operations and Command (JOC) forum ensures that the ministry does not operate in isolation. The details

of its assigned tasks would require the cooperation of other government departments and countries that enjoy defense treaties with Zimbabwe. Because of this need, there is the constant involvement of all the relevant ministries in the JOC.

### **3. Domain**

The domain of the ministry determines "for whom" the products of the ministry are provided. The population of Zimbabwe directly benefits from the services provided by the soldier. The security rendered by the military facilitates a good economy, good trade, and general tranquility in the country.

### **4. Agenda**

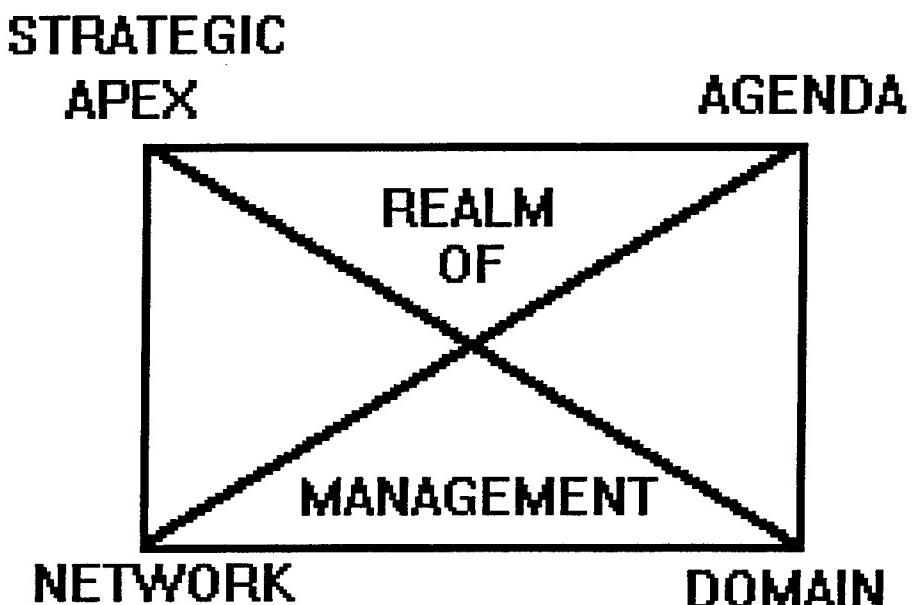
The Agenda includes the policies and projects that are aimed at fulfilling the objectives of the ministry. Policies concerning the type of weapons to procure (in order to counter any perceived threats to the nation), determination of military strategy, or assessments of manpower requirements to meet existing or future demands have serious planning implications. These issues constitute the Agenda, for they are always at the back of the Strategic Apex's mind when it debates policy issues.

### **5. Realm of Management**

This refers to the day-to-day management activities of carrying out the Agenda. Management aims to coordinate all the departments to ensure the effective attainment of the

Agenda. Central to these management functions is the personnel department and the line managers who have to ensure that the staffing situation will allow the present and future provision of enough trained personnel to meet the demands of the Domain.

Figure 9 shows how the linkages can be shown through a diagram. The four pillars represent the structure of the



**Figure 9. Organization Matrix of the Ministry of Defense**

Source: Bernard Reiman (1973)

Ministry of Defense. Their importance is the same. They all interact with the realm of management, which has to coordinate them through the day-to-day activities of the staff in the ministry.

## B. PLANNING SECTION AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

For the overall success of the Agenda, the cadres at every corner of the Strategic Apex have to have a fair amount of training to execute their duties effectively. Since the public service is in competition with the private sector for qualified personnel, manpower planning becomes a fairly critical activity. Such planning helps to ensure that the ministry gets the right number and quality of people it requires in the future to maintain the standards called for by the technostucture.

The Principal Establishment Officer, who is also the Deputy Secretary for Administration and Planning, has the responsibility of working out manpower development plans for the ministry. These are then forwarded to the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare for consideration. Two institutions have been set up to assist him in this mammoth task. These are the Planning Section and the Scholarship Committee. The Planning Section compiles all of the data needed for a comprehensive manpower plan. This is expected to match the standards required by the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare. Apart from this task, the section is charged with the overall planning needs of the ministry. These may vary considerably over time from one department to another. For example, the section must assess future office requirements as well as the ministry's future transport needs. The Scholarship Committee distributes

the monies available for training purposes to selected candidates within the Ministry of Defense. That distribution has to conform with the manpower plan formulated by the planning section.

The biggest hurdle for the Planning Section is the lack of a data base from which to draw information. Like the rest of the Public Sector, the Ministry of Defense has no computers to store vital information. All manpower information is kept in personnel files, which are extremely difficult to access. Even then, the information is not updated and is thus unsuitable for a comprehensive plan.

A casual observation of the resultant manpower plan reminds one of a shopping list for its lack of satisfactory projections in critical areas. Figure 10 shows an excerpt of the 1991/92 information presentation by the Planning Section of the Ministry of Defense.

Name of Officer: Arthur Tanaka

Field	Level	Duration	Country	Institution	Qualifications	Future Needs
Management	Degree	3 yrs	Zimbabwe	University of Zimbabwe	Bachelor of Administration	Computers

Figure 10. Excerpt of a Manpower Information Presentation at MOD

What is apparent is that the plan is attempting to accommodate every individual despite the level of education the person may be currently holding. No attempt is made to

match the job to the future expectations of the incumbent who holds it. There is no consideration of whether the incumbent, at his current level of training, is adequately suited for the assignments he or she may be expected to perform. The scholarship so offered is geared toward the "man" rather than the "position." It is perhaps for this reason that the manpower plans emanating from the ministry have found no favor with the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare, which is supposed implement them. The Manpower Planning Unit (MPU) of the Ministry of the Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare confirms that the quality of the plan that emanates from the Ministry of Defense is poor because it does not reflect a systematic approach to planning, which government has been stressing for the whole of the public sector.<sup>31</sup>

Although it is the Ministry of the Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare that approves the release of any civil servant for training, the parent ministry nominates suitable candidates for approved training courses. If the course involves external training, competition for it is very stiff. It often seems that the candidates selected for training are not necessarily the most suitable ones. Staff members, including those who do not have anything to do with the skills the training offers, canvass for selection so much that politics frequently determines the outcome. The suitability

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<sup>31</sup>Report of the Public Service Review Commission of Zimbabwe, Volume 1, Main Report, May, 1989.

criteria are sacrificed in the face of partisan claims by those who want to go abroad for the course. To give a semblance of democratic process in selection, the ministry calls for resumes from a wide spectrum of people in the establishment. This is done despite the fact that the right candidate for the course would be obvious. It is not surprising then, to find auditors being called to apply for a course in Resource Planning and Management when the suitable candidates in the relevant department are available. The idea would be to frustrate the most suitable candidate's chances for selection because, for example, he may be hailing from a region not favored by the decision makers.

If the plan is finalized by the ministry and the Permanent Secretary has approved it, it is then sent to the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare for ratification. Here, the Plan is looked at in the national context and against submissions from other ministries. What tends to happen is that a lot of time often elapses without any tangible feedback from Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare. This has forced the ministry to operate in a vacuum, since it is not allowed to take action on any aspect of the Plan before approval is granted. This delay has generated a lot of frustration, not only for the ministry planners, but also for the donors of the training funds. By the time the Public Service reverts back to the Ministry of Defense on its manpower plan, the manpower situation in the ministry may be

totally changed and, in some cases, it may be time for the compilation of a new yearly plan.

Because of the bureaucratic "red tape" at the Public Service, the ministry has been forced to develop manpower plans outside the guidelines of the Public Service and then find funds to finance them. Financial donors, who are traditionally supposed to channel their funds through the Scholarship Department of government, find such individual approaches attractive since they bypass the bureaucratic hurdles that block the utilization of their funds. In many situations, however, training fund offers are delayed or misfiled by ministry officials so that, by the time follow-up is made, deadlines would have passed.

#### C. CURRENT SITUATION

For a long time, the Strategic Apex of the Ministry of Defense has been concerned with the poor delivery of services to the Army and the Air Force, particularly, as well as the general populace of Zimbabwe at large (Domain). This has been due mainly to the lack of qualified personnel to operationalize the Agenda. The rate of personnel turnover in the ministry and the general signs of a lack of commitment to the work by staff was proving very expensive to the Domain. The Domain felt that, since the ministry was getting the second biggest national budgetary allocations per year, positive results had to be observed to justify that.

Individual departments in the ministry have started to compete for staff development programs outside the country without any reference to the ministry's general manpower development plan. They have gone ahead to approach external donors for training funds to support their mini-programs. Selection of deserving candidates had become so localized as to bring in a lot of personal considerations in the process. For example, a candidate may win selection purely by virtue of his or her geographical origin. Many undeserving candidates have thus found themselves being trained in skills they were never expected to use in their job.

As already mentioned, financial donors for training are more than willing to satisfy these individual departmental approaches. To them, it represents a convenient bypass of the Scholarship Department, which had become an unnecessary bureaucratic hurdle. In such cases, the individual would be sent on the terms of the donor. For example, East European countries have been very forthcoming in these offers. However, used to the Western education system, recipients had found themselves attending courses that are irrelevant to the situation in Zimbabwe. In addition, the students have to learn a new language and get subjected to a curriculum that is generally unacceptable to the Zimbabwe Examinations Board.

On completion of courses, employees are not given "return interviews" by the Public Service to assess whatever new knowledge they would be bringing to the job. For many, it

would be the dreaded issue of going back to the same job (and perhaps same office) without any increment in salary to recognize their additional education or qualifications. Such officers have found themselves being seriously misplaced, as no attempt is made to exploit their newly-acquired knowledge. The end result is that the officer becomes frustrated and, by the time the bonding period expires, he or she may be ready to quit for another job, thereby further damaging the manpower plan of the ministry. This situation, above everything else, accounts for the poor performance of the ministry.<sup>32</sup>

Because personnel turnover has become so unmanageable, the ministry is now reluctant to approve any staff releases for staff development. Doing so has become synonymous to preparing an officer for leaving the ministry. This development has adversely affected the morale of the officers, thereby reducing their quality of service. A vicious circle is thus completed.

On the other hand, the non-use of donor training funds has resulted in an apparent glut of such funds, and the unused money gets returned at the end of each financial year. This has adversely affected donor budgets, which have consequently been reduced. What happens to the ministry manpower planning? The whole exercise is reduced to a useless facade, as everybody is aware that the Strategic Apex is no longer

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<sup>32</sup>This point was noted in the Public Accounts Committee Report to Parliament, Hansard Magazine, Harare, November, 1991.

serious about it. Hence, it ends up gathering dust in someone's out-tray for a very long time.

#### D. PROBLEMS OF MANPOWER PLANNING AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE (MOD)

There are three main, unrelated problems at MOD that seriously affect manpower planning. These are the lack of qualified manpower planners, accessibility to personnel records, and the poor methods of keeping manpower data.

##### 1. Lack of Qualified Manpower

Like other ministries, the Ministry of Defense lacks qualified manpower planners. Turning forecasts into inter-related policies designed to achieve the organization's manpower objectives is an art. It calls for the Plan to be worked out on the basis of comprehensive analysis and the study of information on productivity and costs. The ministry does not have qualified officers to do this, a stage which Nasir calls the Planning and Control.<sup>33</sup>

The provision of such officers is the prerogative of the Ministry of the Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare. The current training programs for officers involved in manpower planning lack appropriate focus. As a result, officers are swayed to regard manpower planning as only a small, part-time function.

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<sup>33</sup>See Chapter III on Literature Review for Nasir's four pillars of human resource planning.

As in other ministries, the personnel function is staffed by officers in the Clerical and Executive Group, with the Chief Executive Officer reporting to the Principal Establishment Officer. The function is staffed by clerical and executive staff because it is seen as fairly routine, administering and enforcing staff rules, regulations, and procedures.

The perceived nature of the work is well-illustrated by the current personnel training courses offered at the National Training Center. The overwhelming emphasis of such courses, as with the personnel function generally, is on the administration of regulations and not on personnel management--that is, the planning, recruitment, and retention of competent staff to meet the goals of government and securing the maximum possible fulfillment of each member of the public service.

The Principal Establishments Officer is responsible for many duties other than the manpower planning function. Even if he wished to do so, he is not resourced to change the prevailing regulatory culture. As a result, no one is responsible for the professional management of careers of individual public servants, the identification of talented staff, or the placing of individuals in jobs for which they are most suited.

## **2. Accessibility to Personnel Records**

The importance of maintaining accurate, comprehensive, and readily accessible personnel records cannot be overemphasized. The records are essential not only for making decisions on individuals about their career development or promotability, but also for manpower planning and organization analysis. In addition, these records obviously have to be accurate for the calculation and payment of salary, pension, and related allowances.

The Ministry of Defense, like all other ministries, does not maintain its personnel records in automated form. Because the same records are manually kept by the central ministry, a lot of duplication is registered. For example, while ministries hold records on each member of staff, the Public Service also holds application forms, performance appraisals, and promotion dossiers on nearly all public servants. Since there is no liaison between authorities concerning the content of personnel records, there is not only duplication, but the partial records held by different organizations may contain incomplete or even conflicting information on an individual. Personnel records are maintained by the ministry's registry staff. The Public Service Review Commission (1989) noted that not all staff in registries who handle manual personnel records are as competent as they should be. It has been alleged at MOD registry that some staff lack the required level of literacy

skills because their training does not adequately cover what is expected of them. As a result, letters and other papers are lost in registry, misfiled, or otherwise delayed in reaching the personnel records system. The Ministry Planning Committee has experienced much trouble in accessing these records when preparing the Plan.

### **3. Lack of Centralized Data Bank**

Perhaps the biggest problem that hampers effective manpower planning in the Ministry of Defense is the absence of a centralized manpower planning data bank. Such a data bank is undoubtedly a pre-requisite for a successful manpower plan. The data are available, and in both usable and reliable form, but they are widely dispersed and stored in different departments. In some departments the whole process of data collection is no longer "user" oriented. Rather, it has become routinized as a mere administrative function. The accuracy of such data risks being compromised.

It is important that manpower planners at the Ministry of Defense identify possible sources of data necessary for planning and identify themselves as data users. The links between the department as a "producer" and the Planning Committee as the "user" should be formalized. The shared knowledge on the content of the data to be collected will simplify the task of data analysis and, more importantly, lead to more reliable policy formulation. If the recruiting unit at the Ministry of the Public Service, Labor and Social

Welfare has accurate data on areas difficult to fill, the manpower planner at MOD can use this to identify the key shortage areas using the INDICATIVE APPROACH to manpower planning. Policies could then be formulated to address that particular problem. (Trecker, 1978)

In the absence of a centralized data system at MOD, manpower planning has focused more on hunting for data and checking its accuracy rather than on analyzing that data for policy makers. In instances where data are not available, the planner has had to resort to the KEY INFORMANTS APPROACH where the use of experts is highlighted. For whatever its merits, the use of people who are knowledgeable in a certain area is not a very reliable method for data collection. A lot of bias tends to creep in. (Trecker 1978)

Computer automation is the best approach for updating and storing data. Computer models are now proving to be useful in maintaining such data. Systems are now designed to capture and code data, store, audit, and sort these data into usable form. Given current concerns about employee privacy, all personnel data systems must have suitable safeguards to ensure accuracy, timeliness and limited accessibility. Typical of the public sector in Zimbabwe, however, MOD is far from computerizing its operations. It is perhaps for the realization of this shortfall that the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare has set up Human Resources Teams in all government ministries. These teams were meant to

work in close liaison with the Ministry Planning Committees and become the link between ministries and the Public Service. However, since they were set up, their success has been questionable.

#### E. CONCLUSION

Inadequacies in current arrangements of manpower planning are among the main causes of manpower shortages in the public sector. Although the Public Service has achieved much during the past decade, it is still being perceived by many people as being staffed with poorly trained officials who are ill-equipped to carry out the tasks expected of them. Effective personnel management in the public sector is essential for the creation of competent public servants with positive attitudes toward their work and responsibilities. The Public Service Review Commission (1989) notes that, only with increasing attention to manpower planning, will it be possible to generate improved motivation and better performance.

Despite some positive efforts registered in this direction, the manpower situation in the public sector continues to be characterized by high under-employment coupled with shortages of skilled personnel in many categories. This state of affairs constitutes a major constraint to the implementation of various economic programs and general socioeconomic development of the country. A critical mass of skills is essential for the benefit of Zimbabwe's investment in infrastructure and productive activities to be fully

realized. Under-employment also constitutes a waste of human resources and a formidable barrier to the task of raising living standards.

## **V. MANPOWER PLANNING SURVEY**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Training and staff development in any organization should be a planned, continuous effort by management to improve employee competency levels. The purpose of resource planning and training, therefore, should be to bring about greater productivity and improved quality. This is why it is imperative for the public sector to constantly search for opportunities to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. With proper planning, employees can be sent for training and staff development programs in anticipation of their promotion or being moved to other jobs within the organization. For this to materialize in the Zimbabwe public sector, there must be a constant reexamination of attitudes toward manpower planning by both the organization and its personnel managers.

### **B. CONDUCT OF SURVEY**

A two-part survey was conducted to ascertain the level of commitment of public sector personnel managers to manpower planning (See Appendix A). A questionnaire was devised listing the manpower activities normally associated with government work. The respondents were asked to rank the activities and show which consumed most of their time and which were of great value to them. The managers were asked to rank the activities on a scale from 1 to 10, with the least

concern being 10 and the most concern being 1. The first part of the survey focused on the question, "What is government's attitude toward manpower planning?" The second part was of a more personal nature, asking "What is your own attitude toward manpower planning?"

#### C. SURVEY: FIRST PART

Twelve questionnaires were sent out to randomly chosen ministries. Ten questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 83 percent. Unknown to the respondents, each questionnaire was marked to identify the ministry. The ministries from which surveys were returned are shown in Table 4. Also shown in Table 4 is the ranking of activities that occupy most of the personnel managers' time.

Recruitment and selection occupy much of the managers' work time. The culture in the Zimbabwean public sector has always stressed this role for its personnel managers. Even in training courses, the issue has been to present the personnel officer as a guardian of the various rules and regulations governing the recruitment and selection of new employees to public service. He is required to know all those cumbersome regulations by heart and his performance is judged by his level of memorization of those rules. Because of this, many managers in the public sector do not envisage their role as anything more than this.

TABLE 4. RANK ORDER OF IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO TEN HUMAN RESOURCE ACTIVITIES, BY MINISTRY  
- ORGANIZATIONS'S EMPHASIS-

Activity	Ministry of Information	Ministry of Industry and Technology	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Environment and Tourism	Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Mines	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Local Govt	Total Points	Rank	
Employee Counseling	7	6	3	8	4	5	7	5	6	6	4	55	3
Industrial Relations	6	5	7	6	6	5	4	4	4	6	5	54	2
Manpower Planning	7	3	6	5	8	4	7	7	5	5	7	59	5
Personnel Records	9	7	5	6	8	6	4	3	4	7	7	59	5
Personnel Research	8	7	7	8	7	8	8	9	8	8	7	77	10
Recruitment and Selection	5	4	5	4	7	5	7	6	5	5	5	53	1
Welfare	8	7	7	8	7	8	6	7	8	7	7	65	7
Salary Administration	7	8	8	7	8	7	7	7	7	7	8	74	9
Training	9	6	4	5	6	5	4	6	8	5	58	4	
Management and Organization Development	8	6	8	8	5	6	7	7	5	6	66	8	

The recent political awareness of public sector workers of their indispensability has forced personnel managers to put added time to the industrial relations function. In the background of a political set-up modelled on a socialist philosophy, with its stress on the importance of the worker to production, the interests of public sector workers could not be ignored. Their good working relationships with the employer have to be maintained to avoid disruption in the system. Hence, the personnel managers have responded appropriately, though their emphasis on these activities is not for improving the quality of their assignments but to avoid worker strikes. They have been forced, for example, to carry the burden of an unproductive worker until all the bureaucratic paperwork has been pushed through, and this could take several years.

As seen in Table 5, manpower planning is ranked midway on the scale (see right-most column). Yet, it calls for the current and future employment of productive labor. It should therefore precede the recruitment or selection aspect, since one needs to know the number and quality of persons to be recruited. One needs to employ the units of labor after an assessment of future needs. Even for training, which is ranked higher (4th) than manpower planning, the analogy indicates that the opposite should be taking place. A good training program has to rely heavily on manpower planning

because it should account for the quality and quantity of available trainees before being formulated.

#### D. SURVEY: SECOND PART

By giving more time to other aspects of human resource management than manpower planning, the personnel managers are not necessarily reflecting their attitudes toward manpower issues. The managers may only be victims of a system that glorifies the blind recruitment of employees without due regard for their incremental productivity. The second part of the survey attempted to assess the personnel managers' own individual views of manpower planning vis-a-vis other manpower activities. Table 5 shows the results of the second part of the survey.

Most of the personnel managers in the public sector have strong links with human resource associations in the private sector. In fact, 80 percent are either active members of the Institute of Personnel Management or are improving their qualifications through reading courses offered by the Institute. Also, over 50 percent view their public sector service as a stepping stone to the private sector. These are private sector associations that stress the importance of manpower planning in human resource management. Private sector attitudes on human resource management have developed independent of a culture that views things the opposite way.

TABLE 5. RANK ORDER OF IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO TEN HUMAN RESOURCE ACTIVITIES, BY MINISTRY

- MANAGER'S PERSPECTIVE -

Activity	Ministry of Information	Ministry of Industry and Technology	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Environment and Tourism	Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Mines	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Local Govt Rural & Urban Development	Total Points	Rank	
Employee Counseling	7	8	4	6	5	4	5	5	5	6	3	53	4
Industrial Relations	8	7	7	7	8	8	4	3	3	7	7	66	5
Manpower Planning	5	4	4	4	5	3	7	3	4	5	5	44	1
Personnel Records	6	5	4	7	7	3	4	4	4	5	6	51	2
Personnel Research	7	6	8	7	9	7	9	7	7	8	8	76	10
Recruitment and Selection	9	6	7	5	9	8	7	7	7	6	4	68	7
Welfare	6	6	9	6	7	7	6	5	7	7	7	66	5
Salary Administration	8	7	8	8	9	5	8	7	8	7	7	75	9
Training	7	7	3	5	4	4	5	6	7	4	52	3	
Management and Organization Development	10	4	9	7	3	7	10	8	4	6	68	7	

This accounts for the impressive ranking of manpower planning--at the number 1 position of importance--as seen in Table 5.

#### E. CONCLUSION

The culture in the public sector denies manpower planning its appropriate status. The management of rules and regulations on recruitment and selection, which the managers of personnel are made to do, highlights the importance of these functions over manpower planning in a sector that shows little regard for the future. Yet, it is this lack of concern about the future that has led to the failure of the public sector to adapt to organizational change necessitated by a rapidly changing environment. Issues such as failure to recruit in certain posts or shortages in vital departments translate into poor delivery of services to the Domain. However, with the attitudes that the personnel managers have for positive change in public sector human resource management, all is not lost. What the government needs to do is to give more flexibility or discretionary authority to its personnel managers so that they can manage in a manner that they themselves determine is required. The Zimbabwe public sector will have to move its personnel function from the routine administration of regulations to the positive management of all employees as individuals and as members of a dedicated public service. This is the best hope for saving the manpower planning function in the public sector.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. CONCLUSIONS

A comprehensive survey of large and medium-sized United States organizations in both the private and public sectors in the mid-1960s found a few fragmented attempts at manpower planning. In 1975, 85 percent of the same organizations studied showed that some sort of personnel planning was being implemented. Of these, over half regarded it as a major activity.<sup>34</sup> The trend, then, was expected to continue as progress was being made in clarifying planning concepts and in developing new and better planning methods and techniques. Today, an increasing number of organizations realize the potential of personnel planning in helping to manage human resources in a systematic way.

Manpower planning is not a new concept to the Zimbabwe public sector. What will be new is the use of manpower planning as a scientific tool in overall development planning. Beautiful national development plans have failed in the implementation stage because little or no thought had been put in developing the prerequisite manpower. Zimbabwe, through

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<sup>34</sup>The first survey was reported in A R Janger's Personnel Administration: Changing Scope and Organization, appearing in Journal of Studies in Personnel Policy No. 203, NY (The Confederation Board 1966). The second survey by the same author in same journal appears in essay, The Personnel Function: Changing Objectives and Organization (Confederation Board Report No. 712 NY).

its first Five-Year National Development Plan (1986-1990), has listed "the enlargement of employment opportunities and manpower development" as one of the six development objectives. In the preceding eight years, the public sector grew tremendously both in size and participation in national economic development. More than anything else, these two factors made it imperative that the public sector develop its own manpower planning machinery to plan, link, and channel sectoral activities within the broader framework of national manpower and development planning. The creation of the Manpower Planning Unit (MPU) within the Ministry of Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare, an organ which, by any standards, has had very little impact on manpower planning, can still be seen as a positive step. The noble objectives of the MPU have already been discussed elsewhere in this thesis. This thesis contends that the effectiveness of manpower planning in the public sector has been greatly compromised by various inadequacies, the most notable of which have been institutional and, ironically, manpower-related. But, above all, it is the apparent lack of a holistic approach to manpower planning that has neutralized effectiveness.

Public sector performance is always in the public eye. Inadequacies in the present arrangements in manpower planning have plainly been the underlying causes of the criticism of government performance by members of the public. Personnel management is about getting the best out of people for the

benefit of the organization and, ultimately, for the benefit of the public. In the public sector, this management would include the recruitment and retention of public servants who are competent to implement government policies, committed to the delivery of effective and efficient public services, as well as highly motivated and capable of adapting to change. Improved personnel practices are thus crucial to securing the current Zimbabwe public service reform and modernization.

#### B. RECOMMENDATIONS

##### **1. Upkeep of Main Baseline Data**

In May 1987, the latest date for which reliable figures are available, there were about 160,000 public servants. From that time to about 1991, the sector has gradually grown to match the ever-increasing responsibilities of the service. The December 1986 Manpower Plan data indicate that about 45 percent of public servants were employed either in the ministries of Education or Health and over 63 percent of staff were in the four largest ministries. The average number employed in the remaining ministries was 1,634 per ministry. The size of the ministries is relevant with regard to the scale of professional personnel services in each ministry and to the need for cross-ministry career development for public servants. An analysis of public servants by age and grade is not available. Data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO) indicate that over 75 percent of public servants in 1987 were under the age of 40. Although the Public Service

Commission (PSC) could not confirm the statistical evidence, casual observation confirms that a significant number of senior posts are filled by relatively young people, thus blocking the career opportunities for younger junior staff. Age-by-age per grade data, together with other grade-related data on turnover and vacancies, are essential for sound personnel planning. It is strongly recommended that grade-related information be collected and analyzed as part of the improvements in manpower planning.

## **2. Trained Manpower Planners**

To develop a manpower plan, both individual ministries and the central ministry must start to build a reliable data base. Data should be drawn from existing personnel records that hold information on the numbers of skills and competencies of public servants. Detailed vacancy and turnover information is also required so that recruitment and in-service training needs can be assessed. The experience of the MPU indicates that satisfactory data bases do not currently exist within ministries.

The inadequacies of data are in part attributable to the lack of previous commitment to manpower planning within ministries and to the continuing lack of credibility that manpower planning has for senior management in many ministries. Apparently, many in senior management positions do not adequately appreciate the importance and potential benefits of manpower planning. The necessary senior management commitment

will more readily be given if they can identify the potential benefits within their respective ministries, rather than being asked to respond to yet another request for information from the center.

At the moment, however, it is clear that ministries do not have staff with skills necessary to formulate and exploit to their advantage their own manpower plans. While the Permanent Secretary in each ministry is responsible, as well as accountable, for manpower planning and control, the competencies of the relevant officers have to be developed through the central ministry's training programs. This calls for the strengthening of the MPU to enable it to give professional guidance to such ministry staff to boost the quality of ministry manpower plans.

Although increasing attention is being given to personnel management in the public sector, ministry manpower plans are presently only drafts constructed on insecure foundations. Manpower plans are essential as a means of identifying priority manpower needs and allocating scarce human resources. It is recommended that systems be in place in the ministries first and the information used within ministries before service-wide aggregate indicators and measures are usefully developed. Efforts to develop computerized personnel records systems for the public sector are applauded. This will assist manpower planning considerably and will be the quickest and cheapest route to providing

the separate ministries, as well as the central ministry, with the means to manage their manpower.

### **3. Organization of Personnel Records**

The existing manual record system has not been able to meet the requirements for aggregate data on Zimbabwe public sector personnel issues. It has proved to be a very weak link in the effort to improve manpower planning. Information on turnover and age by grade, recruitment by grade, vacancies and duration of vacancies by grade, transfers, and other matters is not easy to acquire. Readily accessible aggregate information on skills and competencies in the public sector and on skills gap is also unavailable.

Efforts are being made to computerize personnel records held at the central ministry, but these efforts are long overdue. It is also a pilot personnel record system that will not become operational for at least three years. Moreover, there is an underlying assumption that the ready cooperation of ministries and individuals will be forthcoming to ensure that the computerized records are complete and accurate; and that the Central Computer Services (CCS) has competent technical staff to handle the scheme. The important thing is that the accuracy of forecasts and the effects of personnel strategies be assessed and fed back to appropriate parties on an on-going basis. This would help to keep track, as well improve, future forecasting and programming efforts.

It is recommended that the proposed computerization be made compatible with computerization already underway in some technical departments such as the Examinations Branch or the Salary Service Bureau (SSB). Furthermore, it should be made compatible with a network of ministry systems in due course. If the central ministry's experimental system is to be part of a network, that system should provide readily accessible and relevant data to personnel sections within ministries as well as those responsible for personnel training. Computerized personnel systems can assist manpower planning, recruitment, deployment, and training. In light of this, the central ministry is urged to review the user specification for the computer system to ensure that the full range of potential applications has been considered.

#### **4. Devising a Manpower Planning and Control System**

A good manpower planning and control system in the Zimbabwe public sector must embrace the following factors:

1. A realistic judgment by the central ministry of what part of the national budget can be devoted to human resource development.
2. A careful consideration of the bids for manpower, both numbers and kinds, based on an analysis by ministries of competencies required, and taking account of central guidance and constraints. All bids should take account of development priorities, identified staff shortages, the need to strengthen areas of weakness, and the scope for reducing inefficiency.
3. A realistic assessment by all ministries, aided by the central ministry, of the availability of the kinds and numbers of staff for whom bids have been made.

4. Monitoring by individual ministries and by the central ministry to ensure that manpower budgets are used for the purpose intended and give good value for the money. (Public Service Review Commission, 1989)

Omission of any of these factors will result in the failure of the manpower planning and control system. This will have strong implications for government expenditure control and for the value-for-money of central government services, including their effectiveness.

#### **5. Tackling the Problem of Shortages**

Although the ministries may not be able to account satisfactorily for all vacancies, many are due to skilled manpower shortages. Discussion above noted that the analysis of changes in stocks of public servants by occupational group would be extremely useful. This information does not appear in current systems, as draft manpower plans do not break the analysis down below officer and employee group.

To alleviate shortages, the public sector has had to rely on expatriates. In February 1987, 41 percent of all engineers, architects, and geologists in the public sector were expatriates. Continued shortages are expected in the same fields, including medical staff, science teachers, and other technical fields. The main issue is how the public sector can recruit and retain Zimbabweans to fill posts in shortage areas. By its very nature, a well-conceived manpower plan can be used to tackle both the problems of recruitment and retention in key posts.

## **6. Measuring Results**

The Zimbabwe public sector needs a way to assure that manpower planning, once implemented, is having its desired impact; otherwise, it becomes meaningless. Manpower planning links an organization's business planning and the broad organization objectives with the specific programs and activities that make up human resource management. (Walker, 1980) As such, the principal measure of effectiveness must be the strength and adequacy of these linkages. For example, these questions have to be answered:

1. Has the organization adequately prepared for changing human resource requirements?
2. Has the organization been able to utilize its human resources effectively in line with its goals and with affirmative action plans?

It is one thing to say that "people are our most important asset." It is another to identify the return on this asset and, thereby, the cost-effectiveness of expenditures in human resource management.

In the 1970s, a number of organizations experimented with an innovative way of measuring the impact of human resource actions. They assumed that expenditures for human resource management activities, like planning, recruitment, or training, were costs that sometimes generated long-term returns. Hence, human resource accounting (HRA) provided a way to identify, measure, and communicate information about human resources. To some, it represented a new way of thinking about people as assets. HRA, in essence, means

accounting for an organization's employees among its other resources; that is, measuring both the cost and the value of personnel. (Walker, 1980)

The Zimbabwe public sector can benefit from this concept. Its public servants represent capital assets, and they can provide returns over long periods of time.

There are two ways of measuring costs through HRA. These are:

**a. Replacement costs**

Through this method, people are valued on the basis of the actual acquisition costs. This means keeping track of all the costs associated with recruitment, selection, hiring, placement, and training either as orientation or on the job. Indirect costs such as the trainers' time, lost productivity during training, time of managers spent in the interviewing, and costs involved in promotion have to be included.

**b. Historical Costs**

This follows the accounting concepts of historical cost accounting. The concept calls for the tallying of all costs associated with a government investment in human resources and then depreciating this investment over time. The cost of turnover may thus be comprehensively measured as including all costs incurred in acquiring and developing employees and not merely the cost of replacing them.

**APPENDIX A**  
**THE PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE**

When Zimbabwe became independent in 1990, practically the whole of civil service was white. Though it was not the intention of the government to see a white civil service disappear (it had considered them necessary to achieve a high standard of efficiency in carrying out its programs), most of these civil servants--either feeling threatened or taking advantage of the Pensions and other Benefits Act, 1979--left the service. It had been hoped that the scheme provided for by this Act, worked out by the British Government and the Rhodesian regime, would secure the continued employment of the white civil servants after 1980.

In May of that year President Canaan Banana issued, under Section 75(2) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe, a general directive of policy to the Public Service Commission. The directive pointed to the major tasks of government in resettlement, education, reconstruction and development and the consequent need to expand the service "to discharge this growing range of tasks," and required that "the African people of Zimbabwe must be afforded increasing opportunities of playing their full part in these developments." The Directive went on to reassure "all European officers" that the Government "will continue to protect their terms of

service and support the Public Service Commission in its statutory duties; that it will maintain the integrity of the Service, and that it is confident that the impending expansion of the Service will offer them continuing prospects of satisfying careers." Full African involvement, the Directive continued, would be achieved "by orderly steps." These were that the Public Service Commission would:

- a. Recruit staff to all grades of the Public Service in such a manner as will bring about the balanced representation of the various elements which make up the population of Zimbabwe;
- b. Give more rapid advancement to suitably qualified Africans in appointments and promotions to senior posts in the Public Service;
- c. In carrying out these directives...due regard to the maintenance of a high state of efficiency within the Public Service and the need to satisfy the career aspirations of the existing Public Servants;
- d. Make an annual report on progress.

**APPENDIX B**  
**SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

FROM: PINIAS RABSON MUSHAYAVANHU  
NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, USA

TO: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (PERSONNEL)

This small survey aims to find out which of the various listed personnel functions is of much value to you and take much of your time in your day-to-day work as a personnel officer in the public sector. We kindly request that you take a few minutes of your time to complete it. Indicate your selection on a 1--10 scale with the least concern being 10 and the most concern being 1.

<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>OCCUPY MUCH TIME</u>	<u>OF MUCH VALUE</u>
Employee Counselling-----	-	-
Industrial Relations-----	-	-
Manpower Planning-----	-	-
Personnel Records-----	-	-
Personnel Research-----	-	-
Recruitment & Selection-----	-	-
Welfare-----	-	-
Salary Administration-----	-	-
Training-----	-	-
Management & Organization Development-----	-	-

Please return to Mr. Gudo, Ministry of Defence when done.  
Thanking you in anticipation.

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